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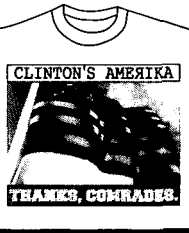

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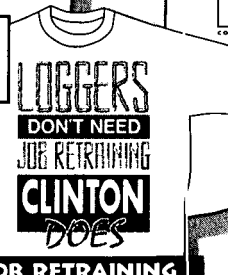

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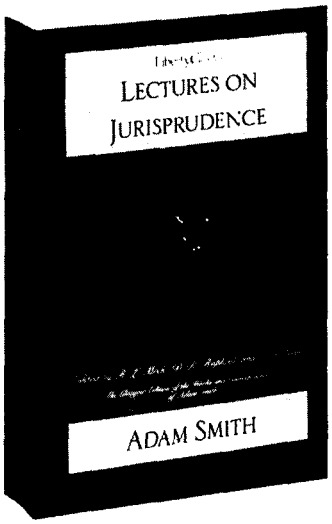

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What are the facts?

The Background of the Boycott. The Arab states try to make the world believe that their hostility toward Israel is based on Israel's "occupation" of "Arab lands", which came under Israeli administration as a result of the 1967 Six-Day War. But the Arab boycott of Israel goes back even further—to 1946, two years before the state of Israel even existed.

How the Boycott works. The boycott works on several levels. The *primary boycott* prohibits Arab people and Arab states to do any business—with and in Israel. The *secondary boycott* attempts to prevent businesses anywhere in the world from any economic activity with Israel and threatening them with economic retaliation if they do not conform. It is a very potent weapon, since most countries and most businesses are well aware that the large Arab market and its enormous oil wealth make it most unattractive to get into the bad graces of the Arabs. Little consideration is given to the fact that the boycott is a gross violation of international law. The U.S. is the one shining exception to the almost universal acceptance of this economic blackmail. There is also the *tertiary boycott* that punishes firms that deal with blacklisted businesses. And perhaps the most damaging aspect is the so-called "*voluntary boycott*", by which companies, and in some cases entire countries, refrain pre-emptively from doing business with Israel in order to avoid retaliation by the Arabs.

The boycott also applies to international shipping, aviation and tourism: Most ships and airplanes calling on Israel are barred from Arab ports; airplanes enroute to and from Israel cannot overfly Arab countries. Israelis or any travelers with Israeli visas in their passports may not enter most Arab countries.

The Arab Boycott Office maintains a blacklist, which at last count included over 6,300 entries in 96 countries. In the United States alone, over 12,000 firms each year receive requests from Arab firms for boycott compliance. In Europe and Asia, where, in contrast to the United States, boycott compliance is usually legal, the numbers are probably much higher.

> "The Arab boycott is undisguised economic warfare against the state of Israel. It is totally unrelated to any territorial dispute the Arabs may have with Israel."

The Cost of the Boycott to Israel. The primary damage of the boycott to the Israeli economy is that it prevents or considerably hampers investments in the country. That loss is estimated to be on the order of $500 to $600 million per year. The loss of potential trade with the Arab countries alone is on the order of over $500 million per year. Because of the boycott, Israel's commercial exports are at least 10% less than they would otherwise be—a loss of about $1.2 billion per year!

The Arab boycott is undisguised economic warfare against Israel. The boycott is totally unrelated to any territorial dispute the Arabs may have with Israel, since the boycott started over twenty years before any such territories came under Israeli administration. Its purpose is the strangulation of Israel—to achieve by economic means what the Arabs, despite many tries, have been unable to achieve by military means. But the greatest losers of the boycott may well be the Arabs themselves. Blinded by their hatred of Israel they have prevented the Middle East from becoming an area of growth and prosperity exceeding even the Asian Pacific Rim countries. Rescinding the almost 50-year old boycott would be an encouraging signal to the world and to the Israeli public. Their not bringing even such a gesture does give a clue that the intentions of the Arabs are not peaceful and that Israel is justified in proceeding with greatest caution in any peace negotiations.

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ABOUT THIS MONTH

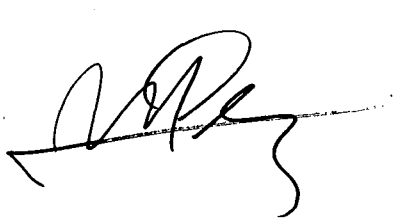
by

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski

IT WAS THE TOUGHEST talk heard at the United Nations since Nikita Khrushchev took off his shoe. To some, it anticipated Madwoman Hillary's comparing Rep. Dick Armey to Dr. Kevorkian. Bill Clinton was warning the august world body that it might at some unspecified time have to say no if it expects the American people to support its indispensable peacekeeping efforts. Why was Bill so hopping mad? According to the *New York Times*, "the United States wants the United Nations to present a brighter picture of the Somali peacekeeping mission." In other words, the U.N. needs a David Gergen to sell its dubious work in a way that will bring glory and greatness to Bill Clinton. President Bill gave a hint of the desired spin when he told the U.N., "In Somalia, the United States and the United Nations have worked together to achieve a stunning humanitarian rescue."

OF COURSE, BILL'S a self-effacing guy at heart. Just the previous night in New York, he'd confessed to assembled Democrats that "I was always worried that I never would quite fit in modern politics, which is so much television and 30 seconds and sound bite and look macho, whether you are or not, and all that sort of stuff." Like a man who's been beaten down too long by the woman he lives with, Bill finds consolation in weakness—which might explain why he's become the most U.N.-friendly president since FDR and why a life-long anti-American like the current U.N. secretary-general finds it a pleasure to push him around. No doubt Boutros Boutros-Ghali's ears perked up when he heard Clinton call on the U.N. to *modernize* its operations: "Together, we must prepare U.N. peacekeeping for the twenty-first century." Sweeter still was Clinton's apparent offer to turn the Pentagon and CIA headquarters over to U.N. control: "We support the creation of a genuine U.N. peacekeeping headquarters with a planning staff, with access to timely intelligence, with a logistics unit that can be deployed on a moment's notice, and a modern operations center with global communications." Who is this mysterious new overlord of U.S. foreign policy? Jeffrey Gedmin explains, beginning on page 30. Perhaps next year American interests will be better served if Hillary addresses the U.N.—and saves her Kevorkian comparisons for the sec-gen himself.

AFTER ALL, HILLARY has her place in history to worry about, and so far she's gotten no further than P.J. O'Rourke's New Enemies List (see page 20)—not that she's not top dog there, too.



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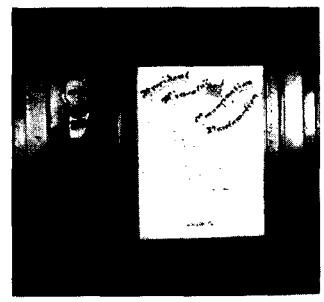

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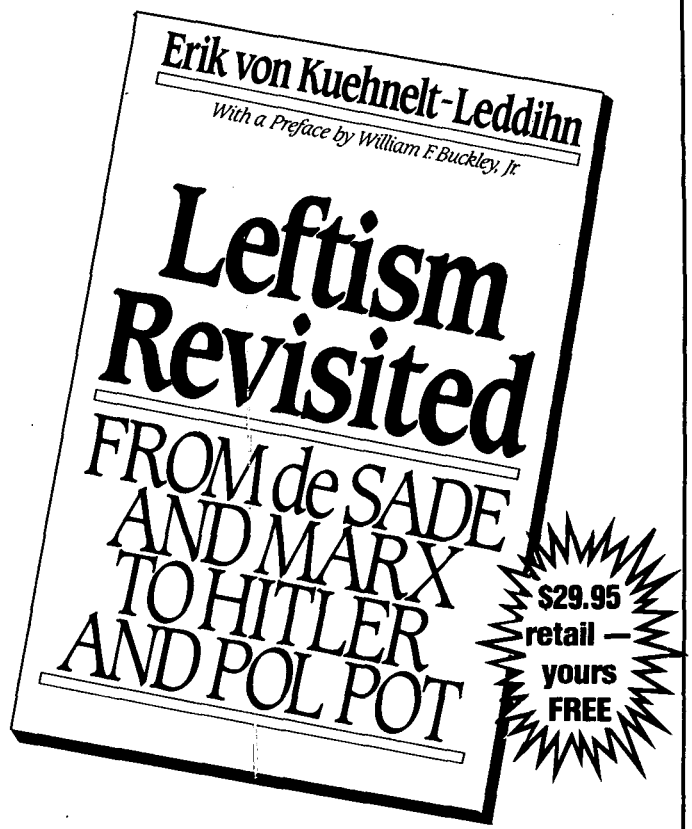
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CONTENTS

The American Spectator Vol. 26, No. 11 November 1993

Departments:

The Continuing Crisis 10

Correspondence 12

Editorials / *Father Higgins, RIP / Senator High Horse,* by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. 14

Capitol Ideas / *Immigration,* Sí; *Welfare,* No, by Tom Bethell 18

Presswatch / *Fairness Most Foul,* by John Corry 50

Spectator's Journal / *To Syria, With Love,* by Saul Lewis 52

The Washington Heights Spectator / *Miracle on 204th Street,* by Edward Conlon 54

The Nation's Pulse / *The Framing of Pat Nolan,* by John Von Kannon 56

Ben Stein's Diary / My *Private Idaho,* by Benjamin J. Stein 58

The Public Policy / *Choice: A Burkean Dissent,* by Charlotte Allen 62

Politics / *Florio Fights Back,* by Grover G. Norquist 64

Constitutional Opinions / *Mainstream Radical,* by Terry Eastland 66

The Talkies / *The Fall of the Family,* by James Bowman 68

Moscow Bulletin / *Bolshie Ballet,* by Jonas Bernstein 83

Current Wisdom, by Assorted Jackasses 96

The Palace Spectator / *Oh, to Be in Graceland . . .* by Stuart Reid 98

Book Reviews:

Nathan Bedford Forrest (Jack Hurst), reviewed by Robert D. Novak 71

The Immobile Empire (Alain Peyrefitte), reviewed by William McGurn 72

Coming Attractions (Robert J. Stoller and I. S. Levine), reviewed by Francis X. Rocca 74

Degenerate Moderns (E. Michael Jones), reviewed by George Sim Johnston 76

Whoredom in Kimmage (Rosemary Mahoney), reviewed by Christopher Caldwell 80

The Real World Order (Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky), reviewed by Peter J. Spiro 82

Features:

Page 20

Collective Guilt, by P.J. O'Rourke **20**

To mark the November birthday of Great Americans Joe McCarthy and P.J. O'Rourke, our fifth annual New Enemies List—which this year applies the Nuremberg Laws to all operatives and apologists of the Clinton regime.

The Secretary-Generalissimo, by Jeffrey Gedmin **30**

Since Bill Clinton doesn't seem to want to do it, U.N. secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali is finding it easy to run U.S. foreign policy.

Superfund as Godzilla, by Geoffrey Norman **38**

Al Gore and the EPA have created a monster that even sucks the blood out of socialist businessmen in Vermont.

Clintonism in One State, by James Ring Adams **44**

Gov. Lowell Weicker won liberal plaudits when he passed Connecticut's first-ever income tax two years ago. It is destroying the state's economy. His next move: casino gambling.

Three Limericks, by Tom Riley **36**

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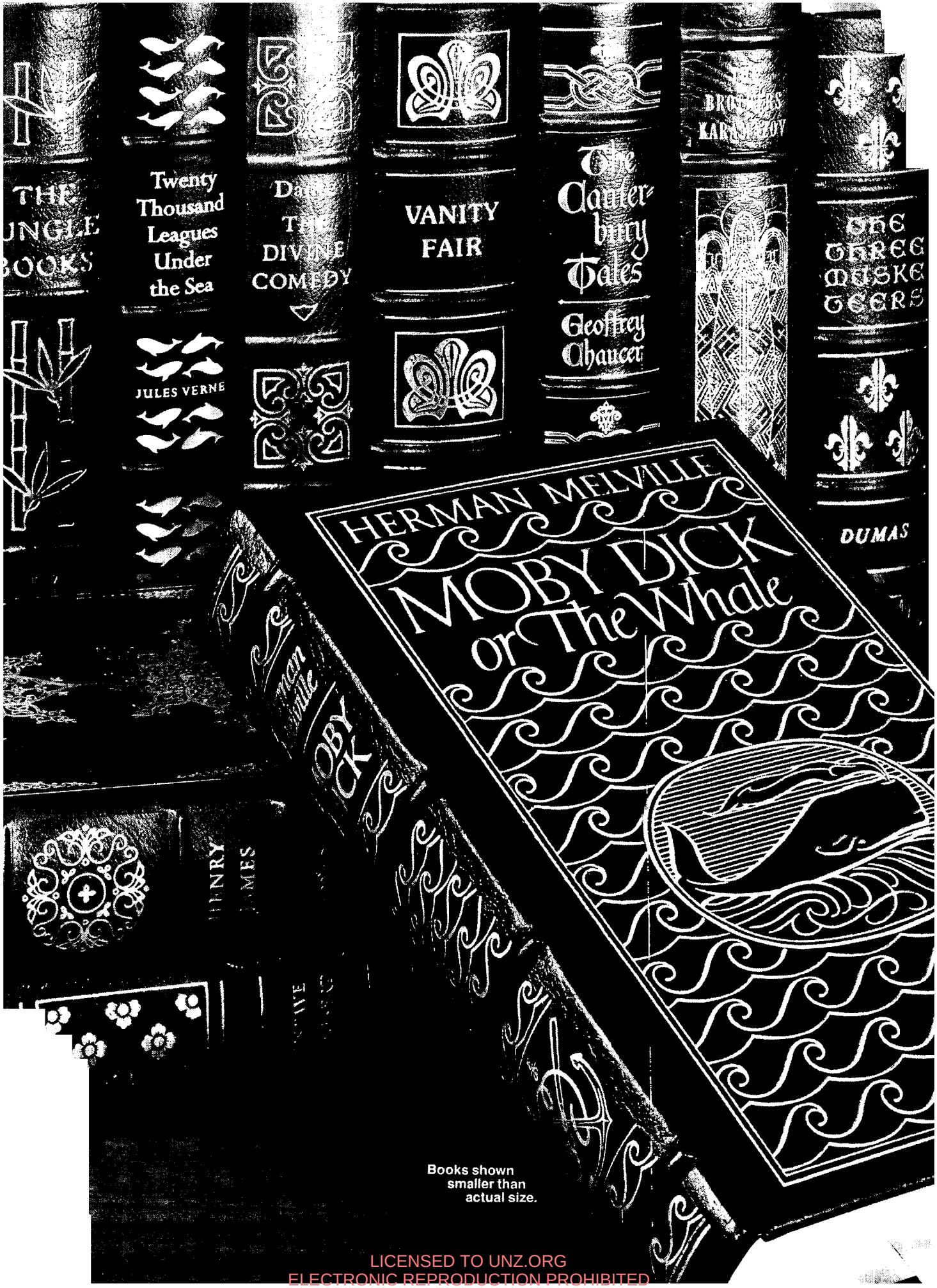

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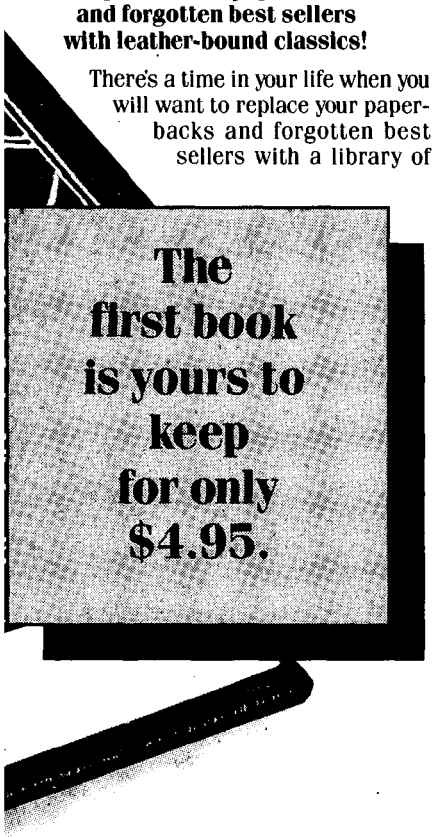

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• September was President Bill Clinton's best month yet! All right, it was his first good month. Okay, maybe "good" is stretching it, but all his other months have been worse, including January, in which he had scarcely eleven days to exert his buffoonish powers. But in September his approval rating soared to 50 percent, though his disapproval rating remained a gruesome 30 percent. Several factors account for the rise in his ratings: (1) With the end of summer, the insidious press could no longer show those disgusting shots of Boy Clinton overwhelming his swimming trunks. (2) Throughout September, Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton never wore the same hairdo three hours in row. (3) Hillary is performing much better on television; during interviews her eyes still do not move when her face moves, but she is smiling sometimes. Even more to her credit, she has yet to curse or to scratch anyone's eyes on camera.

• The major cause of President Clinton's increased approval rating is that he is now following the example of his great Democratic forebear, George Washington Plunkitt. In September, President Clinton "seen his opportunities" and he took 'em. No sooner had the Department of Education reported that almost half the American population can barely read or write, than the president promptly unveiled his National Healthcare Contraption. Lamentably, its intricacies and deceptions were leaking all over Washington days in advance, and occasionally falling into the hands of those blessed Americans who can read. One is Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who adjudged the plan's financing scheme a "fantasy." President Clinton responded with his usual hurt feelings. "I have worked harder to get better cost estimates on this than anybody ever has," he mewled, adding that Senator Moynihan is "a very brilliant man, but he and his committee staff have not done anything like the work that I've done." What does this mean? That Boy Clinton has been doing pushups on the White House lawn, or cleaning out the garage, or that he expects teacher to give him an "A" for effort?

• The Central African Republic's former ruler, deposed Emperor Jean-Bédel Bokassa, was released from prison in historic Bangui after serving six years of a twenty-year sentence for murdering schoolboys, keeping the body parts of various deceased political opponents in a large deep freeze and available for late night snacks, and spending a quarter of his country's national income on his coronation. Otherwise, he was a model chief of state. The Central African Republic's outgoing President André Kolingba pardoned him and all convicts being held in the country's twenty prisons, in a move that Bangui's political cognoscenti believe was meant as a practical joke. Friends of President Kolingba, however, say that the pardons demonstrate a progressive streak that has been growing in President Kolingba ever since he somehow began to receive fundraising appeals from the Democratic National Committee and learned what a hell of a mess the world is in. Upon being sprung, former Emperor Bokassa laid hands on an elaborate field marshal's uniform and delivered a speech to thousands of cheering morons in front of Bangui's cathedral, during which he compared himself to Jesus Christ and made several other grandiose claims suggesting that during imprisonment he may have been allowed access to MTV or *Rolling Stone*. A Barney the Dinosaur impersonator was beaten by three boys, ages 10, 11, and 12, at a Galveston, Texas K-mart; but in an apparent swing to the right, authorities in Berkeley, California, arrested "The Naked Guy." He is Mr. Andrew Martinez, the celebrated University of California student who has been appearing on campus naked and attempting to attend class clothed only in a backpack, which is hardly the point. The Berkeley professoriate has been surprisingly slow to come to his defense despite the fact that he is the

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living embodiment of liberalism's most honored value—indeed its only consistent value—the value of disturbing the peace.

• Television journalism sparkled with several historic interviews during the month. After Israel and the PLO made peace and exchanged pleasantries during a September gathering at the White House, Secretary of State Warren Christopher appeared wide awake in interviews on all the major networks and may be asked to appear on Oprah to explain how he is overcoming narcolepsy in his narcolepsy support group. Ted Koppel held a "town hall" meeting in which President Bill Clinton manifested symptoms of logorrhea so alarming that the *New York Times* reported it on the front page of its September 25 edition. And ABC's "20/20" on February 24 broadcast the first interview with the estimable Mrs. Lorena Bobbitt. Mrs Bobbitt explained in memorable language her rationale for severing her husband's penis from his person, after a session of unsatisfactory conjugal embrace. When asked if she did it for "revenge," she replied: "No . . . I was scared and I just wanted him to leave me alone. I don't think no woman should be treated . . . like I was, I don't deserve this, no woman deserves this, nobody." Mrs. Bobbitt is the first penis-severer ever interviewed on national television, though the practice has been known of since the dawn of the television era, and was recently very popular in the jungles of Central America.

• On September 8, the Clinton-Gore team introduced its "reinventing government plan." The body of Ferdinand Marcos was returned to the Philippines under the watchful chin of his son Ferdinand "Bong Bong" Marcos, Jr. In Melbourne, Australia, a government tribunal is forcing a ballet school, the Sefra Burstin School of Dance, to move after the lawyers for a brothel next door complained that the young ballerinas were harassing both the lupanar's clients and ladies of delight by "grabbing Minties and running out" Mr. Nicholas Styant-Browne, the triumphant lawyer, proclaimed the decision "a victory for common sense." New York City's high estate as a cultural center suffered yet again when the American Museum of Natural History finally shipped the skeletons of four Eskimos to Greenland for interment. They had been brought to the museum by the explorer Commodore Robert E. Peary and were for years the source of controversy. Now they will receive a traditional Eskimo burial in the Arctic permafrost, unless ecologists get wind of the operation.

• The Clinton administration announced plans to intervene in Bosnia. Then it announced plans to send troops. Then it announced that the troops would be in a NATO command structure, then a U.N. structure. Then those plans were put under review, and the president addressed the United Nations, notifying its illustrious members that it needed to be "reinvented." He jogged through Central Park and changed his mind about the American role in Somalia. Then he changed his mind about America's role in New York City. Finally he returned to the White House. And there have not been any of those mysterious reports in the *New York Times* about his traveling around the country with a "change of shirt." What is this change-of-shirt stuff, and when will we get the lowdown on it?

—RET

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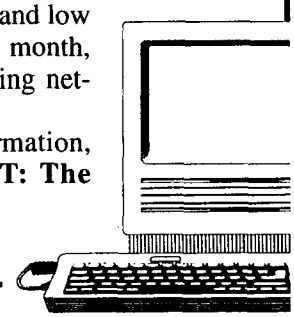

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Frostie Reception

I thoroughly enjoyed Richard Carlson's "Frostie's Revenge" (*TAS*, September 1993) and hope that *TAS* will publish more of his writing—perhaps excerpts from his forthcoming memoir *New Tales of the Barbary Coast*, or anything else he chooses to write.

—E. Howard Hunt
Miami Shores, Florida

I'm sure there was a point to Mr. Carlson's interminable "Frostie's Revenge." What, exactly, was it?

—Walter D. Pope
Piney Flats, Tennessee

Thank you so much for that wonderful story by Richard Carlson titled "Frostie's Revenge." What a terrific writer! I certainly did not expect to see this kind of article in your magazine. Your decision to include this article indicates to me that you place high value on quality writing regardless of the topic. . . .

This story sings! The description of Izzy Mitrovitch as a man "with furry eyebrows like summer caterpillars," is just one example of an expert writer getting little details down in clear English to convey a picture.

—Harold Theisen
Brooklyn, New York

Rose Garden Strategies

In reading Brit Hume's report on the aftermath of his Rose Garden "showdown" with President Clinton ("My Fall Into Disabuse," *TAS*, September 1993), I couldn't help thinking that, while juxtaposing the reactions of Clinton-lovers and Clinton-haters to the event was, to be sure, entertaining, a more telling comparison went unmentioned: namely, that of Presidents Clinton and Bush in similar circumstances.

When Clarence Thomas was nominated to the Supreme Court, he too made a touching statement about his childhood in the deep South, and "the nuns" that insisted he make something of his life. This, too, was followed by questions of a political nature by reporters who, presumably, are paid to ask such questions. While visibly disappointed, Bush nevertheless acted with poise, treated the reporters with respect, and answered their questions. Clinton, on the other hand, threw a temper tantrum, picked up his ball, and went home, thus proving once again that last November, 43 percent of us sent a boy to do a man's job.

—Peter M. Stein
Lorton, Virginia

Regardless of who is being questioned, I advocate and implore the use of a truly critical, confrontational, yet deferential mode of questioning by the White House press corps. I am a left-liberal subscriber to your magazine who believes (as anyone should, regardless of ideology) that Brit Hume's line of questioning toward the president was not only appropriate but necessary and that the president's reply was inappropriate and cowardly. Too often, many of the press corps sacrifice questions of integrity in order to secure their relationships (past or present) with the president.

In addition, it is refreshing to see TV news correspondents with the intelligence, forthrightness, and enterprise to publish their opinion and analysis. Brit Hume combines well the poise and objectivity to *report* the news and the capacity and perspective to *analyze* it.

—Frank Cohen
Binghamton, New York

Campus Sweetheart

I recently received a letter inviting me to subscribe to *The American Spectator*. As an incentive for subscribing, you offer something called "The Anita Hill Report," which, as expected, is simply another one of David Brock's insane, unprofessional, and slanderous diatribes against a person whom I happen to know, as I have been teaching at the University of Oklahoma since 1979 and can speak from my own personal knowledge. As you should know by now, a number of review articles by serious journalists have demonstrated Mr. Brock's incompetence and lack of interest in the truth. But I wouldn't expect you to mention that in your cover letter.

I am, however, pleased to see that this courageous colleague of mine has succeeded in driving you fascistic, red-neck, KKKhristian KKKonservatives straight up the wall! You just can't get over it, can you? You can't tolerate the idea that an African-American woman would actually have the gall to stand up and oppose the choice of your white, Protestant, Anglo-Saxon, millionaire, spoiled brat of a president (ex-president, actually). . . .

In any case, you won't have the honor of seeing me on your subscription list.

Up yours! (As we used to say in the sixties.)

—William H. Huseman
Norman, Oklahoma

Hill 1969

May I confer on David Clayton Carrad a "God Bless You" for his report from "Hill 1969" (*TAS*, August 1993)? I ask this humbly as a veteran who did not leave the confines of the United States during the Nam conflict, but did help provide target and damage updates on a timely basis (1969-70).

Although I don't own a "boonie hat," I would have acted the same way during Bill Clinton's appearance at the Vietnam Memorial. Carrad's article made me proud again to be a veteran. I'm especially proud of the "about face" and ashamed of the media's non-coverage of another heroic action by our American veterans.

—TSgt. Jim Halpin
USAF Retired
King George, Virginia

Scout's Honor

To update entry No. 29 of P.J. O'Rourke's "100 Reasons Why Jimmy Carter Was a Better President Than Bill Clinton" (*TAS*, September 1993):

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Carter Administration: Boycott of Moscow Olympics
Clinton Administration: Boycott of National Boy Scout Jamboree

—Ted Edin
Edina, Minnesota

Christina Reagan

I must take exception to Edmund Morris's statement ("In Memoriam Christina Reagan" *TAS*, August 1993): "Let us admit it . . . the battle against

(continued on page 85)

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Father Higgins, RIP

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Indianapolis

They buried coach Bob Knight's favorite cleric out here in the rolling greenery of south central Indiana the other day. Bob Knight is, of course, one of the great coaches in sport. He is also one of sport's great characters, known for his adamantine principles and, not incidentally, for his irascibility. Now, alas, when he blows there will not be a ruddy-faced cleric in Roman collar standing by the bench, eyes cast heavenward.

Father James P. Higgins was an unassuming priest who somehow left a profound mark on most of the eminences he encountered; though he was infinitely more at ease with ordinary people, ministering faithfully to their needs, spiritual and otherwise. His sudden death from a heart attack encourages me to enter a debate that I missed out on a few months ago when the Pope came to Denver and the American media treated orthodox religious views—whether Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish—as quite shocking.

"A Troubled Church In Changing Times," was the theme of most of the coverage. It is a hackneyed line that has been resorted to by boob journalists for decades in reporting on orthodox institutions. "Times," of course, in this century have been changing since roughly August 1914, and the orthodox churches have changed hardly at all. What did the commentators expect? Is the Pope supposed cheerfully to relinquish centuries of teaching based on scriptures held to be the word of God, and take up the belief system of the modern American progressive? But what is that belief system? There was a day when the belief system of the American liberal was at least coherent. Now it is idiotic with contradictions: obsessed with child abuse, but also with introducing homosexuals into the Boy Scouts, insistent that women are the same as men—strong and self-reliant—albeit terrified by a lewd glance from the local sexual harasser. Show me a prized liberal value and I shall show you a high-minded liberal pompously contradicting that value.

Even such defenders of the Catholic Church as the columnist E.J. Dionne cannot defend the Church as being anything other than a fine social welfare movement in need of a few corrections. Drop the ban on abortion, birth control, and celibacy, admit women to the priesthood, and clean up this mysterious mess over child abuse, and E.J. believes the Church will get on with its noble role of spreading progress: guaranteed human rights (ever more human rights, and animal rights, too!) educational opportunity, improved dental care, sex education, all manner of personal counseling. And what about infrastructure? Is the Church sufficiently eloquent on the need for more highways and waste-treatment facilities, E.J.?

Actually it is doubtful that any of the orthodox churches of the country feel duty-bound to serve as an arm of the Democratic party or for that matter the Republican party. They are institutions of prayer, morality, and, for those whose dogma includes it, salvation. Those churches that have entoiled themselves in political and social causes have steadily lost members. As they have denatured their theology into schemes for personal growth they have become the stuff of jokes. Intent on making religion "rational," many have become asylums for kookery. At the services for Father Higgins I actually heard of a couple of liberal Catholic priests who offer "therapeutic massages" at the Indiana University Catholic student center. The priests claim to be trained masseuses possessing wondrous powers over diligently fingered bodies and souls. And they charge for their services! What's their price on baptisms?

An undercurrent of the "troubled church in changing times" saw is that the Church is losing the faithful. Actually orthodox churches everywhere are flourishing, as is the Roman Catholic church

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Times *column syndicated by Creators Syndicate.*

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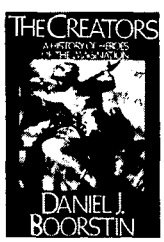

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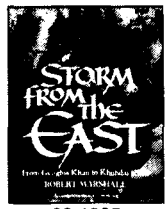

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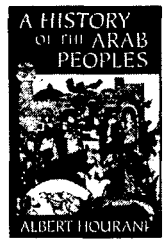

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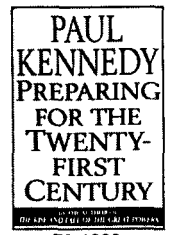

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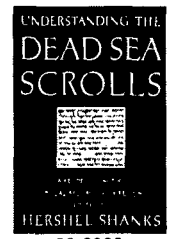

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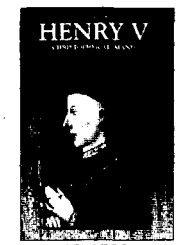

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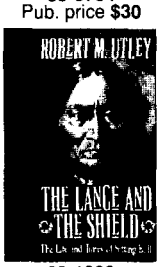

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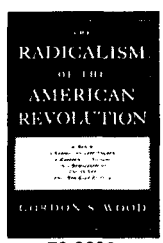

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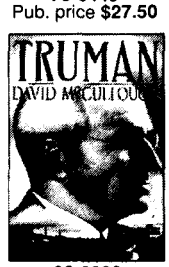

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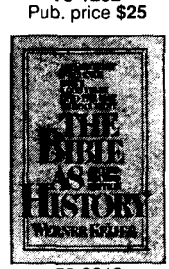

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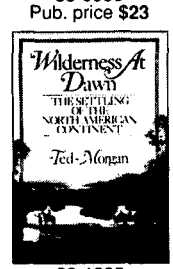

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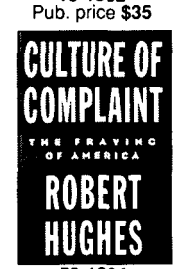

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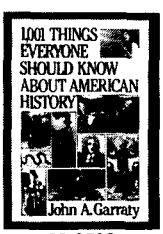

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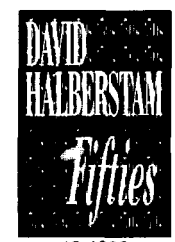

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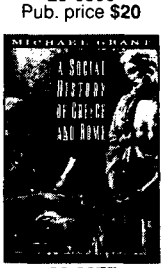

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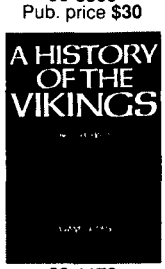

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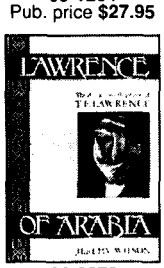

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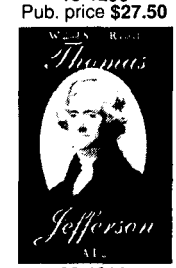

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in those dioceses where orthodoxy is preserved and the mystical masseuses are—dare I say it—held at arm's length. There is in the Republic a widespread demand for the spiritual labors of priests, ministers, and rabbis. They are always overworked and their work is to bear the rites and teachings of their church to the laity. Those rites and teachings are not modern but timeless. They are beyond science and practicality.

Years ago one of Father Higgins's parishioners was placed in a hospital's protective isolation room, having suddenly come down with a deadly leukemia and been given but a few days to live. Minutes after I telephoned him the bad news I witnessed Father Higgins rush through the hospital lobby, suavely pass a security desk of astonished doctors and nurses, and enter our friend's isolation room to administer the Church's Last Rites. All hospital regulations had been trampled under foot in God's work. Now he will do God's work in a more exalted place. At his interment a terrible grief creased the faces of his friends. No happy mystical masseuse can banish that grief, only faith and time. This insight is what drives so many Americans from kookery to orthodoxy. ❐

Senator High Horse

As events in Moscow demonstrate, mighty events are shaping world history. The immediate future could be more perilous for us all than the recent past, with its threats of nuclear nightmare. So what are the energies of our leaders absorbed in? Well, consider Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell of the great state of Colorado.

He has pledged his prodigious energies and sacred honor to blocking the Washington Redskins from getting a new stadium on federal land until they shed the name Redskins. Senator Campbell considers the name somehow humiliating, laboring apparently under the belief that sports teams adopt names that humiliate them. But Senator Campbell is not to be disputed. He has proclaimed himself expert in representing Indian concerns. With him we step into America's phony world of Minority Rights, which has evolved from a series of legitimate complaints into the present humbug governed by charlatans.

Indian concerns are whatever he proclaims them to be. And what makes him expert in these concerns? Well, he is half Portuguese. Perhaps his Portuguese mother's blood has made him the genuine Indian that he claims to be. And maybe it was Lani Guinier's Jewish mother's blood that made her so perfect an expert on black people's concerns. As I say, America's world of Minority Rights is a phony world. Any loudmouthed extremist can lay claim to a leadership position in it.

The senator's noble cause is of course petty and stupid. Dozens of groups in the country could raise similar petty and stupid complaints. Actually many do, which is what is ultimately so distressing. In a time when Americans should be addressing such serious matters as crime, education, family break-up, and national purpose, they are forced to immerse themselves in the petty stupidities of frauds. Often it is the law, and there are thousands of prehensile lawyers on the make, prospering from these laws.

Thousands of public officials are right now codifying regulations to encourage neurotics to complain about their hurt feelings over alleged slurs, harassments, annoyances, bad manners, and on and on. In reading the news stories about these unhappy people and about the efforts such risible creatures as Senator Campbell are taking to appease them, one gets the feeling that America is almost solely populated by victims, losers, and the hypersensitive. "...Give me your tired, your poor/Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," should read Emma Lazarus's poem on the Statue of Liberty "and I shall get them a good lawyer."

Along with the charlatanry there is a large element of bullying in these petty and stupid complaints. There has also been a successful attempt to drive out intelligent thought and respect for the Bill of Rights, in particular, free speech.

Bullying? Think of Jesse Jackson's many public complaints on behalf of petty revisions in common English usage. Now he is urging all non-racists sensitive to the plight of lowly blacks—who apparently remain lowly despite the grand old time Jesse has been having on their behalf for so many decades now—to abjure the term Black for African-Americans? Two decades ago he was admonishing all those who listened to him to abjure the term Negro for Black. The futility of such cosmetic revisions in terminology was noted fifty years ago by the eloquent and perceptive social critic George Schuyler. He was from the Reverend Jackson's race, and back in the 1920s, when he wrote, he had premonitions that phony leaders would supersede legitimate black leaders with meretricious proposals over terminology.

Now of course the phonies dominate practically every minority movement. Show me one living leader of a minority group who can point to one proposal of his that has demonstrably improved the conditions of his group. For every one you might come up with, I shall point out a dozen who have made their way to the top by discovering ever more fanciful problems that supposedly lay their people low. Has Senator Campbell ever implemented any policies that have relieved his peoples'—whether Indian or Portuguese—poverty, health problems, or educational deficiencies? Will the elimination of the term Redskins be of any help in assuaging these genuine problems? I can think of not one practicing Moses of Minority Rights whose passing would damage his constituents' prospects for improvement whatsoever.

And what about the Bill of Rights and our right to free speech? Clearly the Washington football team is free to call itself anything it chooses if the First Amendment has any meaning. But this is where intelligent thought comes in. It is in the best interests of all the bogus spokesmen for the so-called aggrieved to drive out intelligent thought. This is being done in all the hubbub about the quack rights of the aggrieved. And what will take the place of intelligent thought? Why, brute power of course, which is an unwelcome prospect for minorities and majorities alike. ❐

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Maybe Clinton should read his mail from time to time.

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Immigration, *Sí*; Welfare, *No*

by Tom Bethell

While in San Diego recently, I took the electric trolley down to the Mexican border, a pleasant ride of about twelve miles, past rectangular warehouses and dusty oleander bushes, to Chula Vista. A concrete footbridge takes you over Interstate 5 and then you walk straight across the border, no questions asked or documents requested. You're in Tijuana, and lots of cabdrivers want to drive you downtown. I went with my friend Charlie Thomas, and to keep the sun off our heads we both wore white duckster hats; probably we looked like Harvard alumni somehow separated from the reunion.

I was expecting to see bare terrain on the Mexican side, development on the U.S. side. It was the other way around—sorry about that. The hills on the U.S. side must be "owned" by the military or maybe the Border Patrol and are mere meadows; the Mexican slopes are covered with houses. No doubt there's more economic activity going on south of the border now. That wouldn't be hard to believe, given the power of the environmental movement. I worry that they will soon be able to extend their dominion to Mexico if the North American Free Trade Agreement passes. Imperialism, not loss of sovereignty, is the great NAFTA-worry.

In Tijuana, Charlie inspected a striped burro and pronounced it to be genuine. I had a V-8 juice. Then it was time to go back because our taxi driver was patiently waiting.

Crossing the border into the U.S. you go through a turnstile, and an INS official gives you a practiced glance. I showed a driver's license but was told you don't even have to do that. They have a "profile" of likely illegals and do little more than occasional spot checks. So many people are coming across that a huge increase in the bureaucracy would be needed to permit a more thorough inspection. It's the same with cars heading north on the interstate. Sometimes they are stopped and searched, but when that happens the highway instantly becomes a parking lot, and the Mexicans coming across for day-labor and housework in San Diego are three hours late on the job. Then there are complaints to the local politicians.

So, as far as I could see, there really isn't much of a border at all. It's an obstacle that most of the time is "flattened" by market forces—the heavy volume of passengers who are crossing at every minute. The potential exists to turn it into a substantial barrier, but the cost of doing so is presumably reckoned to be higher than the benefits. I think I like it that way. If immigration is such a big problem, why does one not hear more complaints about it in San Diego?

Immigration, of course, has become a great bone of contention among conservatives. *National Review* seems to have more or less joined the anti-immigrant camp, and *Forbes* senior editor Peter Brimelow—like me, a (former) Brit—has, well, gone nativist. I am in favor of more or less unrestricted immigration myself, with the caveat that this is feasible only if all newcomers are subjected to the discipline of the market. If unmitigated by income transfers and privileges for ethnic groups with "victim" status, the market is a potent discipline indeed. It should not be disparaged as "the cult of efficiency," in Pat Buchanan's phrase.

A newcomer who must provide for himself and his family in a pure market economy, with only his own labor and human capital to rely upon, finds himself in a position where he must obey at least most of the Ten Commandments. Virtue is thrust upon him. Furthermore, this discipline is potent enough to override such "cultural" or racial characteristics that he may have brought with him, and which seem to be of so much concern to many of those in the anti-immigrant camp.

In the early twentieth century, when proportionately far more immigrants arrived than today, the discipline of the market was in place and it was effective. Today, unfortunately, this is very far from being the case. There has been a great and calamitous change. What has changed is not that the new immigrants are Mexican and Vietnamese rather than Italian and Irish, and therefore culturally and racially different. It is that the free-market system has been eroded by the ever-encroaching welfare state. What is so disastrous today is that very recent immigrants, even those who are here illegally, more and more have access to that welfare state. There's no escaping that this is incompatible with uncontrolled immigration.

A curious feature of the recent intra-conservative debate on immigration is that the availability of government services to recent immigrants, including illegals, was not much discussed until California Governor Pete Wilson brought it up in August. What this suggests, unfortunately, is that the anti-immigrant people just don't like immigrants period, whether or not they can tap into the welfare state; while many of those who favor immigration are supporters of the welfare state, and don't mind very much if immigrants make use of it, whether they are legal or not.

My own position, which I should

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent and a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

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have thought was widely shared but apparently is not, is that I like immigrants, wherever they come from, and in whatever numbers, as long as they come here to work; but I don't like the welfare state and I would like to see it abolished for everyone, including all immigrants, legal or illegal.

Most would agree, however, that health, education, and welfare benefits cannot be readily provided to anyone who has managed to evade border guards. No nation can afford to be so generous with its taxpayers' money for any length of time. Yet that is more or less the world we live in now. Federally mandated services to illegal immigrants, Wilson pointed out, now cost California taxpayers nearly $3 billion a year. Even liberals seem to recognize that this cannot go on indefinitely. That may partly explain why Democratic Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein want to improve the policing of the Mexican border.

The issue is politically popular (Wilson's approval rating jumped when he raised it), and of course Wilson has been disparaged on those grounds, as though good policy were necessarily unpopular. But even some liberals do dimly see that if the present insanity continues, benefit levels will have to be cut, because taxes cannot be raised any higher. Hmm, come to think of it . . . (idle daydream here) . . . maybe if *enough* immigrants came they would bankrupt the welfare state once and for all . . . Maybe we should *bus* them in by the millions to the public schools and the housing projects and the welfare offices . . .

Supporters of immigration have long claimed that immigrants contribute more in taxes than they take in government services, and a leading exponent of this view has been Prof. Julian Simon of the University of Maryland. I have no doubt that he was right in the past—he may still be today. My concern is that his figures may now be out of date. He rebuts recent claims that immigrants take more than they give—a Los Angeles County study, another by Rice University professor emeritus Donald Huddle—with "Census Bureau data for 1970s earnings." Changes in the law since then have no doubt altered the structure of incentives, however. As Congressman Dana Rohrabacher of California put it, since the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 "we have made it more risky for an illegal to apply for a regular job than to apply for government assistance."

Employers are threatened with steep fines if they hire illegals, and now California Democrats have suggested that employers who do so should suffer RICO-style forfeiture of farms, factories, and other assets. Meanwhile government agencies in California have been advertising for immigrant clients, openly saying that they don't mind whether they are legal or not. After the L.A. riots, the Federal Emergency Management Agency distributed leaflets advising that applicants "will not risk their request for legal residency under the Amnesty Program if they apply for or receive disaster assistance." In San Bernardino, a Public Health Department brochure proclaimed (in Spanish) the "good news" that "you do not need to be a citizen to get Medi-Cal" (state Medicaid), and that illegals who apply need not fear being reported to the INS.

Immigrants once knew that they would have to work and were glad of the opportunity to do so. Now, they enter the degenerate arena of the entitlement culture. And *we* are the ones who are worrying about *their* culture! I mean, a lot of conservatives nowadays worry that newcomers bring a lot of strange "foreign" habits and genes with them, and we greet them with needle-exchange programs, free condoms, and access to the welfare state! Whose culture is rotten here?

The entitlement rot became conspicuous in 1982, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, 5-4, that public education could not be denied to children who had not been legally admitted to the country. The majority (three of whom have now left the court) said the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment applied to education because of the "lasting impact of its deprivation on the life of the child"—sociological guesswork dressed up as constitutional law. The court "struck a blow for minimal decency," the *New York Times* declared.

Today, state officials do not believe they have the right to ask children in public schools if they are in the country legally, and officials in California say they spend $1 billion annually educating illegals. Perhaps another $1.5 billion (in California alone) goes for health and welfare benefits for illegals. Public housing officials also aren't allowed to ask for documents. And the fastest growing component of Aid for Families with Dependent Children, the main welfare program, goes to the offspring of illegals who give birth in U.S. hospitals; the children become U.S. citizens. As the guardians, their mothers get the welfare checks. At that point they are "empowered" with victim status, and no doubt grievance tribunals and government-paid attorneys.

Realistically, it's very unlikely that the statutes affecting U.S. entitlement programs are going to be changed in the near future. But Wilson's office and California Republicans are maneuvering for changes in the law and may try to provoke a case that will return the education issue to the Supreme Court. Until that happens, recent immigrants, legal or not, will continue to be embraced by the entitlement culture, and in some states government benefits will have to be cut for everyone (this is already happening in California). I think even California Assemblyman Willie Brown realizes that taxes cannot be raised any higher. And that's not such a bad outcome. As I say, a few million more "undocumented" newcomers may just about finish off the welfare state: one more argument for an open border. Why be on the same side as Barbara Boxer on *any* issue?

Meanwhile I'm trying to understand the illogical position of such anti-immigrant conservatives as Pat Buchanan. He looks back to the United States of the 1950s, in which he grew up, and sees the huge decline that has taken place. I have no disagreement there. But his conclusion is a non-sequitur: Keep out the foreigners! Why? The American decline has been an indigenous, not an externally driven phenomenon; precipitated by inheritors, not newcomers. The best hope of pulling out of the nose-dive is to bring in lots of new people who have never been anywhere near Choate, Groton, or Harvard Yard. It's the people whose parents were rich enough to give them sports cars for graduation who are the most likely sources of decline. Because they got something for nothing, they see America as a land of injustice and work for "change." Those coming across from Tijuana see opportunity, which is a source of renewal. ❐

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Collective Guilt

To mark the November birthday of Great Americans Joe McCarthy and P.J. O'Rourke, our fifth annual New Enemies List—which this year applies the Nuremberg Laws to all operatives and apologists of the Clinton regime.

by P.J. O'Rourke

This year the Enemies List has been limited to members and cohorts of the Clinton administration, those simps and ninnies, lava-lamp liberals and condo pinks, spoiled twerps, wiffenpoofs, ratchet-jawed purveyors of monkey doodle and baked wind, piddlers upon merit, beggars at the door of accomplishment, thieves of livelihood, envy-coddling tax lice applauding themselves for their magnanimity with the money of others, their nose in virtue's bum. They are the shih tzus of Poli Sci returning to the vomit of liberalism, little boar pigs looking to rut with that sow-who-eats-her-young, the welfare state, squamous muck-dwellers bottom-feeding on the worries and disappointments of the electorate—ditch carp of democracy.

When have we seen such an administration of pukes and feebs? The president and his spawn, incubi at the public teat, surpass Kennedy in their arrogance, Johnson in their lack of scruples, and Carter in their plain stupidity. They are dung beetles in legislation, legislators in the bed chamber, chambermaids on the battlefield, and field marshals in the war against everything reasonable and decent. Suchlike has not passed through that large intestine which is the Executive Branch since Franklin Delano Roosevelt was wheeled up the disabled access ramp to the gates of Hell.

But wait. I could be wrong. Possibly I've failed to learn anything from all the marvelous work that's been done by social scientists over the past three-quarters of a century. Perhaps Clinton and his appointees aren't evil. Perhaps they're sick. And maybe what we think is disorganization, incompetence, mendacity, folly, pandering, and Marxism-sold-by-the-drink is actually a plea for

P.J. O'Rourke is the author of The Bachelor Home Companion, Give War a Chance, Republican Party Reptile, Holidays in Hell, *and* A Parliament of Whores.

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help. If this is true and the Clinton administration is a form of mass psychosis, there's only one thing to do. We must return these people to private life as quickly as possible, by impeachment if necessary. Once the Clintonites are ordinary citizens again, they will be able to receive the mental health care of which they are in such dire need—and all for free, thanks to national health care reforms spearheaded by the First Lady.

It's likely that the president himself is crazy, at least if the *Psychiatric Dictionary* published by Bill's alma mater Oxford University is anything to go by:

> *lying, pathological.* Falsification entirely disproportionate to any discernible end in view; such lying rarely, if ever, centers about a single event; usually it manifests itself over a period of years, or even a lifetime.

Of course, the *vice* president is a loon, too. And an incoherent one. Below is a verbatim transcript from the June 3, 1993, ABC *Nightline* show where Gore attempted to defend Clinton's withdrawal of the Lani Guinier nomination. Ted Koppel has just asked Gore, "Can you . . . tell me what it is they disagreed on?"

> VICE PRES. GORE: The theories—the ideas she expressed about equality of results within legislative bodies and with—by outcome, by decisions made by legislative bodies, ideas related to proportional voting as a general remedy, not in particular cases where the circumstances make that a feasible idea. . . .

Or, if you think the V.P. just had had a little too much Miracle Gro that day, try reading his book, *Earth in the Balance*:

> The cleavage in the modern world between mind and body, man and nature, has created a new kind of addiction: I believe that our civilization is, in effect, addicted to the consumption of the earth itself.
>
> . . . a person who is not "grounded" in body as well as mind, in feelings as well as thoughts, can pose a threat to whatever he or she touches. We tend to think of the powerful currents of creative energy circulating through every one of us as benign, but they can be volatile and dangerous if not properly grounded.

Those are from a random glance at pages 220-21 in the tree-wasting, error-clogged paperback edition of *EITB*.

So Bill and Al are nutty. This brings us to Vince Foster. Foster has no place on the Enemies List. There was no disgrace in what he did. (No one dies of disgrace in Washington; the whole town would be Ur.) And we don't want to heap abuse on someone who has so recently become a Good Democrat.

But there are no exemptions for those who are deranged and wacky and *bad*. There's Jeffrey Dahmer to be considered—and Ellen Goodman. We didn't declare a truce in World War II just because Hitler needed lithium. We didn't unilaterally disarm just because Stalin was running with one wheel in the sand.

As Vince Foster said, "Here ruining people is considered sport." Play ball!

Maya Angelou

Thirty-two years ago, dead, white, European male Robert Frost wrote a poem for a presidential inauguration. It went, in part, like this:

> *Some poor fool has been saying in his heart*
> *Glory is out of date in life and art.*
> *Our venture in revolution and outlawry*
> *Has justified itself in freedom's story*
> *Right down to now in glory upon glory.*

Hark now to Angelou's "On the Pulse of Morning":

> *Your armed struggles for profit*
> *Have left collars of waste upon*
> *My shore, currents of debris upon my breast.*
> *Yet today I call you to my riverside,*
> *If you will study war no more.*

Such is progress in the Clinton years.

Tipper Gore

The September-October 1993 issue of the new magazine for yuppie breeders, *Family Life*, quotes Mrs. Gore:

> "We were coming home from lunch with their dad, and the kids pointed out a homeless woman on the street," says Tipper. "They wanted to take her home. I explained we couldn't do that, but that each of us could do something." She went on to cofound Families for the Homeless, a nonpartisan partnership of congressional, administration and media families to raise public awareness about homeless people and their needs.

And there you have the morality of liberalism in a nutshell. Help people? No. Give them a buck? Of course not. What the true sanctimonious liberal does is "raise public awareness." This is the U.N.-in-Sarajevo school of good works. Tipper, America's bag ladies thank you from the bottom of their, um, paper bags.

The various scads and oodles of children sired by Al ("No goal is more crucial to healing the global environment than stabilizing human population"—*EITB*, p. 307) Gore are not on this Enemies List, however. The same article in *Family Life* has Tipper telling us: "The Halloween the kids like to recount best is when Al dressed up as a carrot."

Sharp as tacks, those Gore kids—they noticed.

Ron Brown

Clinton's secretary of commerce is suspected of having engaged in—you guessed it—commerce. The FBI is investigating allegations that Brown received $700,000 from the Vietnamese government in return for promoting free trade. We don't want any of that—NAFTA or no NAFTA, this is a Democratic administration. Not to worry, Ron, even if the accusations are true, by the time you get done paying Clinton-era income taxes, that bribery offense will be only misdemeanor-sized. →

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THE ARMEY 120

At the end of Clinton's first hundred days in office, Rep. Dick Armey (R-Tex.) gathered a collection of Clinton statements and matched them with subsequent actions and pronouncements. According to Armey, "As of noon on April 27, 1993, President Clinton had reversed himself 120 times. His 120th equivocation came on April 25, when President Clinton assured us that he had 'only broken one campaign promise' as far as he could remember."

Clinton Then	Clinton Now
"Paul Tsongas says a middle-class tax cut is pandering. This isn't pandering . . . I'm going to rescue the middle class." —*February 14, 1992*	"I had hoped to invest in your future . . . without asking more of you. And I've worked harder than I've ever worked in my life to meet that goal. But I can't." —*Oval Office address, February 15, 1993*
"The real mistake he [Bush] made was the 'read my lips' promise in the first place. You just can't promise something like that just to get elected if you know there's a good chance that circumstances may overtake you." —*last presidential debate, October 19, 1992*	
"I won't duck the issues with 'blue smoke and mirrors' and pretend the debt's not there." —*February 10, 1993*	"[The Clinton budget] is mostly smoke and mirrors . . . a sham." —Newsweek *analysis, February 20, 1993*
"[My plan] is basically 50-50 spending cuts, revenue increases for the first four years." —*February 19, 1993*	Net new taxes: $267 billion. Net spending cuts: $55 billion. [83% taxes–17% spending cuts.] —*Congressional Budget Office analysis of Clinton budget, March 1993*
"I would present a five-year plan to balance the budget." —*"Larry King Live," June 4, 1992*	Deficit after 5th year of Clinton budget: $233 billion —*Clinton's budget document "A Vision for Change," February 1993*
"If the money's not coming in there ought to be an automatic mechanism by which you can restrain spending." —*Ibid.*	"Fixed deficit targets would cause deep and direct and arbitrary [spending] cuts over the next ten months." —*George Stephanopoulos, January 22, 1993, explaining why Clinton had rejected the Gramm-Rudman Act's automatic spending reduction mechanism*
"I'm sure—after now almost five weeks in office—that there are more [budget] cuts coming." —*speech to Chamber of Commerce, February 23, 1993*	"The President had no specific cuts in mind and no schedule for making them." —*George Stephanopoulos, the next day*
"I was frankly appalled that we spent so much time the first week talking about [gays in the military]." —*Michigan town hall, February 10, 1993*	"I spent very little time on the issue [of gays in the military] myself." —*same town hall, a few minutes later*
"I think President Bush played racial politics with the Haitian refugees. I won't be shipping those poor people back." —*primary speech, Florida, March 27, 1992*	"Administration to Defend Bush Haitian Policy in Court" —Washington Post *headline, March 1, 1993*
REPORTER: "How are you going to pay for health care reform?" CLINTON: "We are looking at a lot of different options, but the last thing I think we ought to do, the last place we ought to look, is to ask the employers and employees of America who are paying too much for their health care right now to pay more." —*March 24, 1993*	"Mrs. Clinton told the Senate Finance Committee that the White House has dropped its opposition to taxing employees' benefits and will recommend taxing the portion of those benefits exceeding the cost of a basic package of health benefits." —Washington Times, *April 23, 1993*

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Secretary of State Warren Christopher, U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright, and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake

According to the August 19, 1993, edition of America's *Izvestia*, the *Boston Globe*, these three lukewarm warriors are urging the president to allow U.S. combat troops to regularly serve in United Nations peace-keeping missions under the command of U.N. officers. So, when your boy is ordered into battle backwards, armed only with a sharp stick, by Eleventy-Star General Mumbungle Butthole of the Republic of Bulemia, you'll know where to address your letters of complaint.

Warren Christopher

Again. I refer those with short memories or new subscriptions to Daniel Wattenberg's article, "Clinton's Hard-Line Appeaser" in the February 1993 issue of *TAS*. Here Mr. Wattenberg described how Delta Force commander Col. Charlie Beckwith briefed President Carter and the nation's top security advisers on the plan to rescue American hostages being held by Iranian Revolutionary Guards. "Anyone who is holding a hostage," said Beckwith, "we intend to shoot him right between the eyes."

According to Beckwith, who is one of our country's most highly decorated soldiers, Christopher's reply was, "Well, would you consider shooting them in the leg, or in the ankle or the shoulder?"

Janet Reno

Addressing the National Black Prosecutors Association this August, the attorney general said, "We have to do something about guns. If only this nation would rise up and tell the NRA to get lost!" Wait a minute, Stretch, "rise up," or at least maintaining the option to do so, is why we've *got* those guns. Maybe next time you should try making that speech to the survivors of the Warsaw ghetto, or folks who were in Hungary in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968 or Bosnia right now.

P.S.: We didn't notice any NRA officials shooting people in Waco.

A Whole Bunch of Future Ex-Senators and Soon-To-Be Former Congressmen

We know the Democrats love the poor because they just created so many more of them. Landslide Billy's tax package passed the Senate 51 to 50 and the House 218 to 216. This makes every pol who said "aye" personally responsible for the economic rape of the nation. In Washington it's being called "The Vince Foster Vote."

Bruce Babbitt

We remember the interior secretary from his 1988 presidential primary campaign. He's not protecting plant life, he *is* plant life.

Marian Wright Edelman

Head of the Children's Defense Fund and the Fagin of family law. Note how the left has quit trying to be a vanguard to anybody large or healthy enough to punch them in the nose: modern Bolshies pester the crippled, the diseased, and, of course, kids. But kids grow up. And they remember. Take our advice, Marian, and stick to Animal Rights or House Plant Liberation or campaigning for Al Gore.

George Stephanopoulos

Beneath contempt in every sense of the phrase—besides, why bother to attack someone when his haircut is doing it for you? Apparently the President of the United States gets some licks in, too. According to Fred Barnes in the September 6, 1993 issue of the *New Republic*, George's principal role in the West Wing is "lightning rod for Clinton's temper tantrums." Mr. Barnes quotes a senior White House official as saying, "Every president has a lot of frustration. They have a need to blow occasionally. George is someone the president can do that to." We certainly hope mere verbal abuse is being discussed here and that the senior White House official was making no innuendos.

Donna Shalala

The January 23, 1993, issue of *Human Events* reprinted long excerpts from a speech the secretary of health and human services delivered at the University of Chicago on November 15, 1991.

Shalala used the speech to describe an ideal world of the future, as seen through the eyes of "Renata," a typical 4-year-old kindergarten student in 2004:

> Renata doesn't know any moms who don't work, but she knows lots of moms who are single. She knows some children who only live with their dads, and children who have two dads. . . .
>
> [After her kindergarten class is over Renata goes to a small day-care center operated by a] neighbor who takes care of five children in her home. The back yard of the home is a playground which has been constructed with grant money from the city. →

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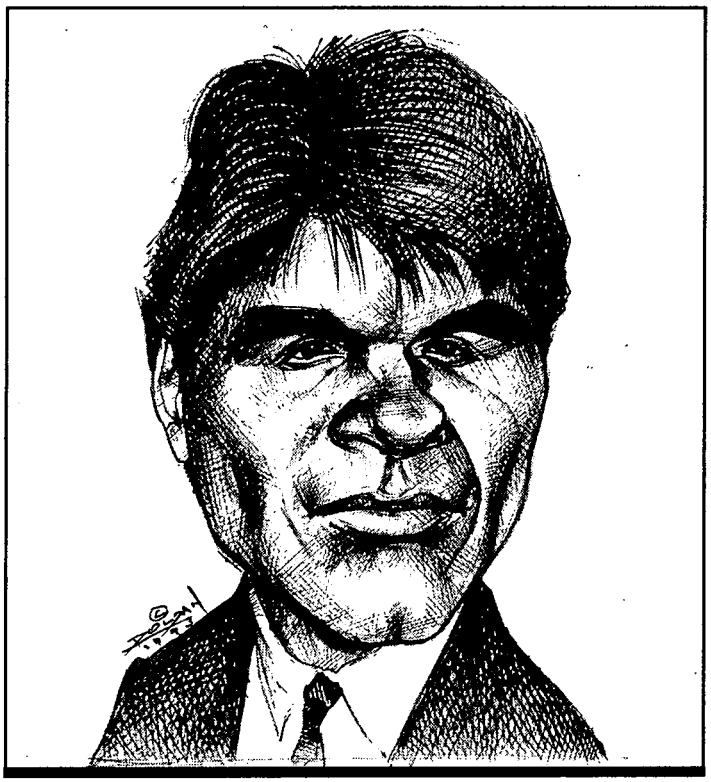
Sometimes she [Renata] and her best friend, Josh, play trucks; sometimes they play mommy and daddy, and Josh always puts the baby to bed and changes the diapers, just like his own dad does at home.

At Thanksgiving time, Renata's teacher will tell a story about how people from Europe came to the United States, where the Indians lived. She will say, "It was just the same as if someone had come into your yard and taken all your toys and told you they weren't yours anymore."

Shalala finished her speech by saying that these things would come to pass because "we made it our top priority in our communities and in our Congress."

When Shalala was chancellor of the University of Wisconsin, she championed a ban on language that would be "demeaning" to any "race, sex, religion, color, creed, disability, sexual orientation, national ancestry or age." We say, "Hey, Donna, you ofay broad, you crap-worshiping putty-faced Stalinist retard, molester of dogs and honorary citizen of North Korea, you're old."



Admiral William J. Crowe

The former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the next ambassador to the Court of St. James's was the only military man above the rank of idiot to support Bill Clinton. Crowe's previous bright idea was to use economic sanctions to get Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. That is, we were supposed to put a money squeeze on somebody who was sitting on top of a third of the world's oil. In your next lifetime, Matey, a commission awaits you in the Navy of Chad.

Harry Thomason and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason

"If Mark Twain were alive today, he would be writing in television," said Linda in an interview in the *New York Times*.

"It may be called the Master Passion, the hunger for self-approval," said Mark Twain in *What Is Man?*

Robert E. Rubin

That layer of hypocritical slime which coats all liberalism has never been thicker than it is upon this chairman of Clinton's National Economic Council and former head of the Goldman Sachs investment house. Ex–bucket shop operator Bob made $29.3 million in 1992, taxed at nice, low Republican rates. Now that he's got his pile, he's over at the OEOB stealing money from old people and middle-class professionals. Nor is this his only foray into white-collar crime. Rubin sent a letter from the White House to his former investment banking clients saying, "I also look forward to continuing to work with you in my new capacity." There's a place in the federal system for Robert E. Rubin—the place just vacated by Michael Milken.

Mickey Kantor

While we're on the subject of moral ooze and goo, let us not forget the United States trade representative. We are going to make a rare exception in Mickey's case and quote a *New York Times* editorial someplace other than in the "Current Wisdom" section of this publication. The following appeared on May 27, 1993:

> Mickey Kantor . . . is a busy man. He's in charge of the nation's effort to reduce foreign trade barriers and increase opportunities for American businesses to expand abroad. He sees nothing wrong with helping the Democratic Party in his off hours to raise money by providing private briefings in his office for big-ticket contributors.

At the very least the public is owed an accounting of who gets to walk the red carpet.

Strobe Talbott

As Com-symps go, the ambassador-at-large to the former Soviet republics gets points for persistence. Even after the Coms went, he kept on symping. In an extraordinarily fatuous piece titled "Rethinking the Red Menace" in the January 1, 1990 issue of *Time*, Talbott opined:

> It is a solipsistic delusion to think the West could bring about the seismic events now seizing the USSR and its "fraternal" neighbors. If the Soviet Union had ever been as strong as the threatmongers believed, it would not be undergoing its current upheavals. Those events are actually a repudiation of the hawkish conventional wisdom that has largely prevailed over the past 40 years.

Morton Halperin

Talbott is a mere useful idiot and fellow traveler. Halperin is an actual traitor to his nation. Instead of hanging him, however, the Clinton administration has nominated him to a newly created position in the Defense Department—the (get this for an Orwellian title) assistant secretary of defense for democracy and peacekeeping. The *Washington Times*, in an editorial on June 28, 1993, described Halperin thus:

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He is a former Nixon administration official who had his phone tapped by the FBI because he was suspected of leaking information to the press about the secret U.S. bombing of Cambodia in 1969. He is a former American Civil Liberties Union lawyer who defended the right of the ultraradical *Progressive* magazine in 1979 to publish a recipe for the hydrogen bomb; who aided and abetted ex-CIA agent Philip Agee in his campaign during the 70's to expose the identities of CIA agents overseas, which is believed to have resulted in the murder of the CIA's Athens station chief; who unabashedly avowed, in print and in congressional testimony, his opposition to any and all covert intelligence operations; who, just before the Persian Gulf war, urged federal employees to come forward with any information indicating the Bush administration was withholding the full truth about its actions in the Gulf. He is a former member of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace who believes the United States should never intervene militarily anywhere without an invitation from the United Nations.

Joycelyn Elders

You've got to love a Surgeon General who's in such serious need of a StairMaster. If she can hand out condoms in the schools, why can't we hand out pistols? The guns would be strictly for protection against threats to the students' health—such as getting shot first. And the kids would be told that abstaining from killing people is always a valid option.

Bernard Nussbaum

The White House counsel advised Clinton to fight for Zoë Baird's nomination despite her illegal nanny troubles; interviewed Kimba Wood but failed to discover that she had nanny problems, too; countenanced White House staff pressure on the FBI during Travelgate; gave a thumbs-up to Lani Guinier; and waited almost thirty hours before giving Vince Foster's suicide note to the authorities. Actually, strike Bernie off our list—he's obviously an RNC plant.

Roberta Achtenberg

The Clinton-appointee Bad Taste Award goes to the assistant secretary for fair housing at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. In San Francisco's 1992 Gay Pride Parade, Roberta rode in a white convertible kissing and embracing her girlfriend, San Francisco Municipal Court Judge Mary Morgan, while Judge Morgan's 7-year-old son was in the car. The convertible was decorated with a sign reading "Celebrating Family Values."

As a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, Roberta took action against the Boy Scouts of America for their policy of barring homosexuals as scoutmasters. She opposed efforts by then-Mayor Dianne Feinstein and city health officials to close gay bath houses to stem the AIDS epidemic. And (we hope this wasn't a related development) she obtained city funding for a recreation and counseling center for homosexual youth. Then Roberta had the nerve to claim that Senator Jesse Helms opposed her nomination because of *anti-Semitism*. Let's run that convertible by the Wailing Wall, Bobbi, and see what kind of reaction you get.

Ira Magaziner and the Entire Task Force on Health Care

They want us all to be as healthy and long-lived as the folks in Ulan Bator and Minsk. "Managed competition" has a nice ring to it. At the horse track they call it "a boat race." You're 45, Ira, not getting any younger, and an intense fellow, we hear. How'd you like to have the Post Office perform your triple bypass?

Laura d'Andrea Tyson

The Capital Research Center, which keeps an eye on the sleazy side of our nation's "non-profit" organizations, has caught the chairman of Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers asserting that "there is no relationship between the taxes a nation pays and its economic performance." Hence the remarkable economic growth in the United Kingdom between the end of World War II and the election of Margaret Thatcher. Go way back and sit down, Laura.

Alice M. Rivlin

Capital Research has also tipped us to the ideology of the Office of Management and Budget's deputy director:

> Rivlin favors higher taxes, especially on energy use; a new value-added tax; and a unified state-level tax on corporations, incomes and real estate to eliminate competition for low-tax states. She argues that "claims made for the advantages of free enterprise in education have no firm basis in actual experience" and praises "centrally planned economies" because they "provide lifetime security for workers."

In the former Soviet Union they've got a word for people like Alice, and, in parts of the former Soviet Bloc, Afghanistan for instance, they know what to do with them.

(continued on page 28)

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More classics from the Armey 120:

Clintonspeak	Reality
"We ask the richest two percent of the American people to pay a little more money because their taxes went down and their incomes went up in the 1980s." —*September 26, 1992*	Percentage of federal taxes paid by top 5 percent in income, 1980: 36 Percentage of federal taxes paid by top 5 percent in income, 1990: 43
"Middle-class Americans are working harder for less money than they were making ten years ago . . ." —*last presidential debate, October 19, 1992*	Real median family income, 1981: $30,916 Real median family income, 1990: $34,300
". . .and they're paying higher taxes." —*Ibid.*	Percentage of federal taxes paid by bottom 50 percent in income, 1980: 7.4 Percentage of federal taxes paid by bottom 50 percent in income, 1990: 6.2
"The problem of the structural deficit is rooted in the early 1980s when we cut income taxes . . ." —Putting People First, *July 1992*	Individual income taxes 1980: $244 billion Individual income taxes 1990: $476 billion
". . . and increased defense spending." —*Ibid.*	National defense spending 1980: 5.1% of GDP National defense spending 1992: 5.0% of GDP
"My plan will cut the deficit in four years and assure that the deficit continues to fall each year after that." —*June 20, 1992*	"Even if Mr. Clinton's policies are embraced in their entirety, the deficit would start climbing again after 1997." —Wall Street Journal, *March 5, 1993* Deficit in 1998 with Clinton budget: $234 billion Deficit in 2001 with Clinton budget: $401 billion —*"A Vision for Change"*
"Let me say you will read the [fiscal stimulus] bill for years in vain and not find those [pork barrel] projects. " —*news conference, March 23, 1993*	The budget justification document contains funding for: • fish atlases • sicklefin chub fish studies • whitewater rafting project • tennis court resurfacings • swimming pools • construction of a casino building
"I will slash boondoggle projects." —*"Putting People First"*	On January 19, 1993, the Clinton administration specifically requested the National Conference of Mayors to prepare a list of "ready to go" projects to include in the Community Development Block Grant program for the stimulus bill. They prepared a list of 4,396 projects, including a golf course, a shopping center, recreational facilities, and a beach parking lot. "Cuts under the heading 'Programs that Don't Work or Are No Longer Needed,' in the Clinton budget total a pathetic $283 *million*." —Barron's *analysis of Clinton budget, February 22, 1993*

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Clintonspeak (continued)	**Reality** (continued)
"I have announced a cut in the White House staff of 25 percent saving approximately $10 million." *—February 9, 1993*	". . . President Clinton has proposed a 25 percent cut in White House staff but a 7.6 percent *increase* in funding for 1994. The president is asking for a supplemental appropriation of $11.7 million and 50 additional employees this year for offices under White House control." —Washington Post, *April 23, 1993*
"Because small business has created such a high percentage of all the new jobs in our nation over the last 10-15 years, our plan includes the boldest targeted incentives for small business in history." *—State of the Union address, February 17, 1993*	"The [Clinton] plan proposes raising taxes on the very segment of society that creates new jobs—small business owners." *—National Federation of Independent Businesses reply to the Clinton economic plan, March 16, 1993*
". . . the lieutenant general was allegedly told by someone on the White House staff, that she didn't speak to people in the military. Those kinds of stories, they're all just made up out of whole cloth . . . it's an abject lie." *—April 1, 1993*	"The snub was confirmed by Army Lt. General Barry McCaffrey, who has twice received the Distinguished Service Cross for valor in Vietnam and commanded the 24th Infantry Division in Desert Storm. The incident occurred as the general was leaving a meeting through the Southwest Gate of the White House." —Washington Times, *April 2, 1993*
"Over the last 12 years we have underinvested in education." *—"Vision for Change"*	Real education expenditures per student, 1980: $4,029 Real education expenditures per student, 1992: $5,850
"We all know that [Head Start] saves money. For every dollar we invest today, we'll save three tomorrow." *—State of the Union address, February 17, 1993*	"The well-known formula cited by President Clinton reflects the success of one non-Head Start project at the Perry pre-school in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in the 1960s. . . . The latest investigation of Head Start itself, by the Health and Human Services Department, calls many of the approximately 1,300 Head Start programs that currently serve about 700,000 children poorly run and unsuccessful at providing youngsters with even basic care." —Time, *March 8, 1993*
"I think it's very important that my Cabinet look like America." *—June 9, 1992*	"Clinton has at least nine millionaires at the top of his administration, more than either George Bush or Ronald Reagan before him." *—AP, January 27, 1993*
"He [President Bush] hasn't fought a real war on crime and drugs. I will." *—Democratic Convention, July 16, 1992*	"White House announces elimination of 121 positions at the Office of National Drug Control Policy and revokes the policy of random drug testing for White House staff." *—White House news release, February 9, 1993*
"Bush won't break the stranglehold special interests have on our elections and lobbyists have on our government. I will." *—Ibid.*	"Robert E. Rubin, the President's chief economic adviser, disclosed he had significant contact with 42 Goldman, Sachs and Company clients, most of them foreign corporations or countries. The list included Taiwan and Mexico and companies from Germany, Japan and England." —New York Times, *March 24, 1993*

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Michael Lerner

When it comes to cordless bungee-jumping into the abyss of bad ideas, it's hard to beat editor of *Tikkun*, Hillary guru, and general dispenser of sociopolitical meadow dressing Lerner.

In reading Michael Kelly's enormously enjoyable Cuisinart job on the First Lady, "Saint Hillary," in the May 23, 1993 *New York Times Magazine*, we discover that Lerner pulled no punches when invited to the White House by his heavy-breathing acolyte:

> "I proposed that the Clinton Administration establish a policy where, for any proposed legislation or new program, there would have to be written first an Ethical and Community Environmental Impact Report, which would require each agency to report how the proposed legislation or new program would impact on shaping the ethics and the caring and sharing of the community covered by that agency. "

Kelly lists a number of Lerner's other proposals for the Clinton administration:

> These include: that the Department of Labor order "every workplace" in America "to create a mission statement explaining its function and what conception of the common good it is serving and how it is doing so"; "sponsor 'Honor Labor' campaigns designed to highlight the honor due to people for their contributions to the common good," and "train a corps of union personnel, worker representatives and psychotherapists in the relevant skills to assist developing a new spirit of cooperation, mutual caring and dedication to work."

Next stop: "Strength Through Joy."

We would kick this man but we have too much respect for our shoes. Hillary is reported to have greeted Lerner by saying, "Am I your mouthpiece or what?"

Which brings us to the Hill of Beans herself. According to syndicated columnist Don Feder, "Michael Lerner has said, 'This woman is just as smart and sensitive and morally attuned as I am.' " And we couldn't have put it better.

Yet perhaps it's time for us to reassess our opinion of **Hillary Rodham Clinton**. Of course we loathe her—who are we to disagree with her own husband? Nonetheless the First Lady has been gravely misunderstood by the right. We call her "harridan," "virago," "termagent," and "The Lady Macbeth of Little Rock." But let us examine a lickspittle piece in the May 6, 1993 Style section of the *Washington Post*. Here the slavering Martha Sherrill writes:

> Way in the future, when she's old and probably legendary, Hillary Clinton wants to be able to look back and feel that she led "an integrated life," she says, sitting in her West Wing office last week. She wants to have felt unified, whole. She wants her emotional life and physical life, her spiritual life and political life all to fit together, in sync, an orchestra sitting down to play the same song.

And suddenly we realize that what we should be calling Hillary is "intellectual dust kitty." She's a bossy little rich snoot of a goody-two-shoes and not real bright who got into a fancy law school when girls were in season. Back in the sixties, the halls of academia were three deep with them.

"Hillary often quotes from an address book full of inspirational sayings and scripture," says the irony-proof Sherrill. We can hear it now: Tomorrow Is the First Day of the Rest of the Month. Michael Kelly, in his *Times Magazine* article, painted the view from Hillary's head:

> The Western world, she said, needed to be made anew. America suffered from a "sleeping sickness of the soul," a "sense that somehow economic growth and prosperity, political democracy and freedom are not enough—that we lack at some core level meaning in our individual lives and meaning collectively, the sense that our lives are part of some greater effort, that we are connected to one another, that community means that we have a place where we belong no matter who we are."
>
> She spoke of . . . a nation crippled by "alienation and despair and hopelessness," a nation that was in the throes of a "crisis of meaning."

What a chowder-skull. The idea of Hillary being the brains behind the Clinton administration is . . . very likely, come to think of it. ❐

Clintonspeak

"[My first one hundred days] will be the most productive period in modern history."

—"Good Morning America," June 23, 1992

"If I'm elected I'll have the bills ready the day after I'm inaugurated. I'll send them to Congress and we'll have a hundred-day period."

—Ibid.

"I would want to have a whirlwind set of early proposals to the Congress and early successes. I would want to have another one of those 100-day periods like Roosevelt did. "

—interview with USA Today, *August 12, 1992*

Clinton Doublespeak

REPORTER: "We were originally led to believe that you'd have an outline to Congress even before the inauguration and presented on Day One or shortly thereafter. When will it be ready?"

CLINTON: "I don't know who led you to believe that, but I'm the only one who's authorized to talk about that."

—press conference, January 14, 1993

Clinton Doublespokesperson

"People of the press are expecting to have some 100-day program. We never ever had one."

—Dee Dee Myers, January 12, 1993

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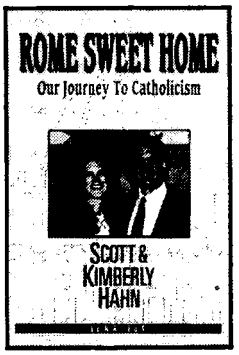
FALL FEATURES FROM IGNATIUS



Rome Sweet Home
Scott and Kimberly Hahn

The well-known couple tell in their own words about the incredible spiritual journey that led them to embrace Catholicism. Their conversion story and love for the Church have renewed the faith of thousands of lukewarm Catholics, and have also influenced countless conversions to Catholicism. The Hahns' deep love of Christ and of Scripture will be an inspiration for all readers.

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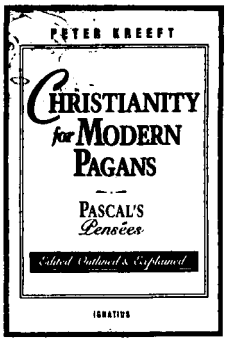
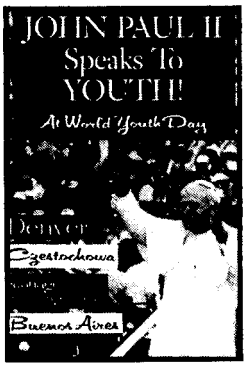
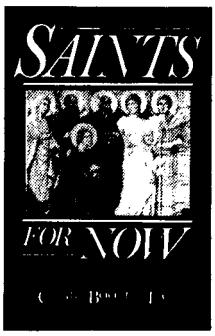


John Paul II Speaks to Youth
World Youth Day

This official commemorative coffee-table volume tells the story of World Youth Day 1993 in Denver, as well as previous World Youth Day celebrations in Spain, Poland, and Argentina. The mutual love between the Pope and youth is exemplified in this book which includes the Pope's talks at World Youth Day, along with dozens of photos of the events in Denver, and articles about the activities involving 200,000 youth. **(Available Mid Nov.)**

480-4, Softcover, $11.95 *479-0, Hardcover, $19.95*





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Edited by Clare Booth Luce

Luce edited this classic on the lives of saints by a group of world-famous authors such as Evelyn Waugh, E. I. Watkin, Whittaker Chambers, Thomas Merton, Barbara Ward and Karl Stern. Saints from every age whose lives provide special significance for our times are here including St. Augustine, St. John the Apostle, St. Benedict, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Helena, St. Thomas More, the Curé of Ars, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and more.

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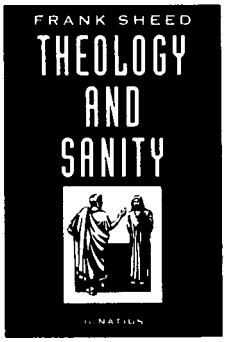

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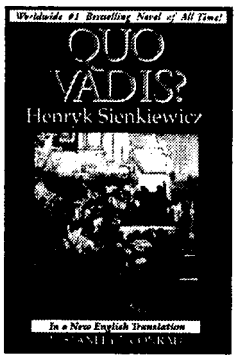
0-89870-475-8, Sewn Softcover, $14.95



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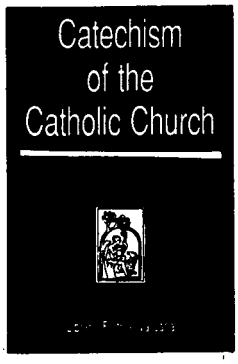

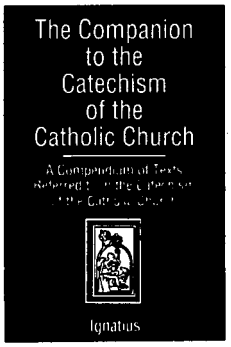

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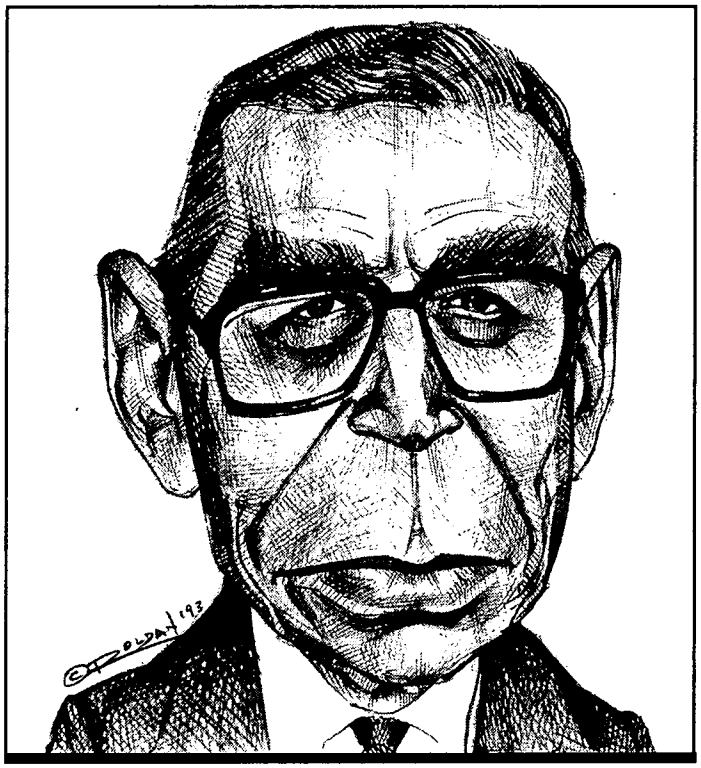
Jeffrey Gedmin

The Secretary-Generalissimo

Since Bill Clinton doesn't seem to want to do it, U.N. secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali is finding it easy to run U.S. foreign policy.



When President Bush's secretary of state Lawrence Eagleburger put his arm around U.N. chief Boutros Boutros-Ghali as the two men shuffled into a meeting on Somalia last fall, Eagleburger addressed the Egyptian as *effendi*, an Arabic word for "sir." Boutros-Ghali replied: "Call me *pasha*"—the Arabic word for "lord." If the remark, overheard by another diplomat and reported in the *Wall Street Journal*, was made in jest, it was nonetheless an unwitting recognition of the recent growth in U.N. power at the expense of the United States, a growth for which the Bush administration deserves its share of blame.

For Bush's legitimization of Operation Desert Storm through the U.N.—and later his use of the U.N. as cover in explaining why he would not send American forces to Baghdad to uproot Saddam—was a foreign policy original sin. It inadvertently set the stage for Boutros-Ghali's rise as the most powerful U.N. secretary-general in the organization's history. Of course, Bush could scarcely have known he would be succeeded by a president eager to do the U.N.'s bidding. Nor could he have anticipated the ambitious Egyptian who would assert an unprecedented mandate for multilateralism.

When the history of America's post-Cold War foreign policy comes to be written, the names Wolfowitz and Tarnoff will figure prominently.

Paul D. Wolfowitz, former Yale professor and ambassador to Indonesia, was the Bush administration undersecretary of defense who drafted a "guidance memo" in the spring of 1991 calling on the United States to preserve its status as sole superpower in the aftermath of the Cold War. The first objective, he wrote, was to "prevent the emergence of a new rival . . . that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union."

The memo ignited a firestorm of criticism. Sen. Robert Byrd of West Virginia derided it as "myopic" and "shallow"; Clinton campaign spokesman George Stephanopoulos called it "an excuse for big [defense] budgets." While some "America First" conservatives, including Pat Buchanan, attacked the memo, it was liberal detractors who led the charge, and they were bothered less by the document's internationalism than by its advocacy of American power and leadership. Delaware Sen. Joseph Biden dismissed the

Jeffrey Gedmin, a research fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, is writing a new book on the future of united Germany and American interests in Europe.

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call for "military extravagance," insisting instead that the U.S. use its resources to put "new muscle into institutions of collective security." No more "America as globocop."

With the election of Bill Clinton, fervent internationalists were given hope for "*real* multilateralism," as Michael Lind suggested in the *New Republic*, not the ersatz type used by Bush in the Gulf war, where America led and an assembled coalition followed. It was left to Peter Tarnoff, number-three in the Clinton State Department and an aide to secretary of state Cyrus Vance in the Carter years, to come up with a multilateralist alternative to Wolfowitz. In a May speech, Tarnoff (an opponent of Operation Desert Storm who called the Pentagon memo "chilling") made the case for Clinton-style multilateralism. He said that, acting alone, "we simply don't have the leverage, we don't have the influence, we don't have the inclination to use force and we certainly don't have the money." In an interview with *Der Spiegel*, he explained that, with the Cold War over, "our proposals would have to be accepted, like those of other countries, by the majority of the international community." Candidate Clinton had provided context for the Tarnoff Doctrine, intoning that "multilateral action [held] promise as never before," and pledging that as president he would work through the United Nations to pursue "collective stands against aggression."

Boutros-Ghali is not given to speaking of "democracy's victory" in the Cold War, but alludes instead to the "discredited ideologies of the past."

Enter Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the 71-year-old Egyptian diplomat elected secretary-general of the United Nations in November 1991, who has become a perfect fit for the Clinton foreign policy team. He deplored the Wolfowitz memo, which would have meant "the end of the U.N." An academic so infatuated with multilateralism that he has authored dozens of articles on the subject, he would like to see the scope and authority of U.N. operations sharply expand under his watch.

So it has. Last year the number of soldiers in the field quadrupled, and the budget for peacekeeping increased from $700 million to $2.8 billion. Estimates for this year's operations run in excess of $3.6 billion. (The U.S. provides roughly a third of peacekeeping costs, though it also leads member states in arrears.) There are now some 80,000 troops deployed in more than a dozen operations around the world, stretching from Cambodia to Somalia to El Salvador to the former Yugoslavia. Missions range from old mainstays like humanitarian relief to a level of involvement in the internal affairs of member states unprecedented in the organization's history. In Somalia the U.N. is rebuilding a nation; in its just-finished peacekeeping mission in Cambodia it was starting from scratch.

In part, Boutros-Ghali is riding a trend: between 1988 and his arrival, the U.N. took on seven new peacekeeping jobs—against thirteen in its first forty years. What Boutros-Ghali can take credit for, though, is a vision of primacy for the United Nations in international affairs. "If I were offered the job five years ago, I would have turned it down," Boutros-Ghali told the London *Observer* in 1991. "The U.N. then was a dead horse, but after the end of the Cold War the U.N. has a special position." Former U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick has been one of the few to strenuously object to Boutros-Ghali's pursuit of this special position, an agenda, in her words, "not in the U.N. Charter and never agreed to by member states."

In his gambit to change his role into that of a kind of international commander-in-chief, Boutros-Ghali has been audaciously reinterpreting the U.N. Charter. Article 97 ascribes to the secretary-general the role of the organization's "chief administrative officer." Article 98 stipulates that the U.N. chief perform functions entrusted to him by organs such as the Security Council, in which all executive authority is invested. Article 99 provides that "the Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security."

No one questions that Boutros-Ghali wants to be an "activist who initiates," says one Georgetown government professor sympathetic to the secretary-general. To be sure, the Egyptian explicitly rejects the model of "faceless reticence" provided by Sir Eric Drummond, the first secretary-general of the League of Nations, the U.N.'s inter-war predecessor. There also appears to be little doubt that Boutros-Ghali already exceeds the ambitious role played by the Swede Dag Hammarskjöld when he challenged the authority of the Security Council over the Congo crisis in the early 1960s.

To meet the spiraling demands of member states and his own seemingly boundless agenda (Ethiopia, Zaire, Liberia, and Sudan are among those rumored next in line for U.N. interventions), Boutros-Ghali has even proposed forming his own international police force—soldiers and equipment from member states under the command of the secretary- general that would be available at a moment's notice. Gone, evidently, are the days when the *Wall Street Journal*'s David Brooks could joke that "multilateral man" commanded only "fleets of ice sculpture swans to cool his cocktail receptions."

Boutros-Ghali was "never going to be a wall decoration" like his predecessor Javier Pérez de Cuellar, says a former staffer from the U.N. secretariat. But his impact would have been limited if not for soulmates like Bill Clinton, who has ceded American sovereignty in crucial areas, under the banner of collective internationalism. Boutros-Ghali is happy to oblige: as he conceded last winter in *Foreign Affairs*, he wants to "rethink the question of sovereignty." Clinton's U.N. ambassador Madeleine Albright has defended the

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administration's foreign policy with the label "assertive multilateralism," but even supporters have begun to wonder. John Judis says it's really "abnegationism" that drives Clinton policies. The *Washington Post* threw up its hands recently over the degree of deference the Clinton White House was willing to show to "everyone—allies . . . adversaries, national governments and international organizations."

Where Clinton has expressed reluctance (as in Somalia), he has followed as the U.N. beckons. Where he has felt inclined to act (as in air strikes in Bosnia), he has permitted the secretary-general to usurp unprecedented powers over U.S. foreign policy. Explains the president: "If you believe that we should engage these problems in a multilateral way . . . the United States has got to work through the United Nations, and all of our views may not always prevail."

So disheartening has the picture become that Senate minority leader Bob Dole quipped that "the last time I checked, the American people did not elect Boutros-Ghali to run U.S. foreign policy."

Boutros-Ghali has even proposed forming his own international police force—soldiers and equipment from member states under the command of the secretary-general that would be available at a moment's notice.

Before taking over at the U.N., Boutros-Ghali had been in many ways a sphinx-like figure, much like his friend Warren Christopher, whom he met in the late 1970s when Boutros-Ghali was made acting foreign minister by Anwar Sadat during the Camp David process. During those years, says a former senior U.S. diplomat, "one always understood that Boutros was not just an alter ego to the Egyptian president. He had an agenda of his own." (Boutros-Ghali has since called both Carter and Sadat "amateurs.")

Boutros-Ghali was born on November 14, 1922, in a 100-room mansion in Cairo. His grandfather had been the first and only Coptic Christian prime minister of Egypt. (An avowed sympathizer of British occupation, he was gunned down in 1910 by a member of the Mutual Brotherhood.) As an Arab millionaire married to a Jewish millionairess who converted to Catholicism, Boutros-Ghali occupies an unusual position in Egyptian society, but merely being a Copt has meant a range of unusual privileges and liabilities.

"It makes us sick every time we see Boutros-Ghali's picture in the paper," said a member of al-Jihad, a band inspired by the old Moslem Brotherhood, after Sadat's assassination in October 1981. "Can't they find a Moslem to be in this important position?" Boutros-Ghali's origins (and his role in Camp David) may help explain why he was never able to rise to the post of foreign minister. (He was promoted to deputy prime minister in 1991, some say, to help him win the U.N. job and get him out of the country.)

Boutros-Ghali's career, nonetheless, has been a highly successful one. His intellectual roots are in France, where he received a Ph.D. in international law from the Sorbonne in 1949 and returned to Egypt to teach at the University of Cairo. After surviving the 1952 revolution that brought Nasser to power, Boutros-Ghali attached himself to Nasser adviser Mohammed Haikal, who brought the young scholar into the inner circles of Egypt's foreign policy establishment. Following a year as a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University (1954-55), Boutros-Ghali began to establish himself, writing for the government's largest mass daily, *Al-Ahram*, in Cairo.

Haikal had staffed the *Al-Ahram* building with intellectuals whose work he hoped to harness in support of the revolutionary regime. Research at *Al-Ahram* was to approach issues with a "scientific method and in the light of a national commitment at the same time." Boutros-Ghali flourished. He became editor of *Al-Siyasa Al-Dawlyya*, the Egyptian *Foreign Affairs*. In 1968, when Haikal founded the Center for Political and Strategic Studies, an offshoot of the government-controlled *Al-Ahram* foundation, he put Boutros-Ghali in charge. A year later Boutros-Ghali became founder and editor of *Al-Ahram Iqtisadi*, an economics periodical that he used as a sounding board for his quirky, and often mutually contradictory views. (He has, for example, belonged to the privatization wing of Egypt's ruling National Democratic Party and served as vice president of the Socialist International.)

Boutros-Ghali's rise was accompanied by a reputation for sophistication and finesse, elegant Old World manners, and charm. While he collected his share of enemies (not least Osama Al-Baz, President Hosni Mubarak's chief of staff), adversaries have in the past been decisively outweighed by friends and admirers.

But Boutros-Ghali's high-handedness at the U.N. has ruffled feathers. Ambassadors complain he often bypasses them to negotiate with foreign ministers directly. While his predecessors usually allowed twenty minutes for the presentation of credentials from a newly arrived ambassador, Boutros-Ghali spends two. One Latin American ambassador who asked to see the secretary-general was given an appointment three months away. Members of Boutros-Ghali's own staff call him "the little pharaoh."

An exposé of cronyism and financial abuse published in August in the London *Sunday Times* prompted Boutros-Ghali to name Mohammed Ali Niazi, an Egyptian with twenty-three years' U.N. experience, to "leave no stone unturned" in rooting out incompetent managers and corrupt officials. Niazi will report directly to the secretary-general. In one incident mentioned by the *Sunday Times*, an Indian-born U.N. career official, Neelam Merani, a former director of the U.N.'s International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), was put on "special leave," which

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means he no longer works but continues to draw his $155,000 a year salary. In another incident, Boutros-Ghali retained Viktor Sukhodrev, Gorbachev's personal interpreter, as a "special assistant" at a six-figure salary, even though Sukhodrev passed retirement age last year.

The corruption is no surprise to some. Ironically, the Bush State Department had overcome for a time its initial opposition to Boutros-Ghali. (Eagleburger had argued that the Egyptian was too old and too inexperienced to manage the U.N.'s vast bureaucracy.) Boutros-Ghali supposedly set out to streamline the secretariat, the office of 5,000 international civil servants who serve the secretary-general, axing fourteen high-level jobs. But insiders eventually recognized much of the shuffling as a shell game: stickers posted in the U.N.'s garage this fall told workers facetiously where to report if they had not been reassigned to at least three new jobs in the last month.

Former U.S. attorney general Dick Thornburgh had worked on bureaucratic overhaul at the U.N. under Boutros-Ghali until he resigned his post in frustration last March. "[My report] was suppressed," says Thornburgh. "Remaining copies were confiscated and in some cases shredded." At the time, Thornburgh had criticized Boutros-Ghali for awarding "costly consulting contracts to high-level officials following their retirement or termination of their services."

To boot, Boutros-Ghali, who largely inherited the staff of his predecessor, refuses to delegate. When he arrived at the U.N.'s 38-story tower in Manhattan, he brought only two assistants, a chauffeur, and a bodyguard (who was forced to return to Egypt after two days, in the wake of sexual assault charges brought against him by a New York hotel maid). His willingness to inherit his predecessor's team is unprecedented and, to career U.N. hands, unfathomable—unless the goal is to make all key decisions by himself. When, last year, Boutros-Ghali bridled at the Security Council's taking a decision on Bosnia without consulting him, he later explained that he had missed the council meeting because important business regarding Cyprus and Libya had drawn him away. When a former staff director at the U.N. secretariat filed a pro forma request through Thornburgh's office for his non-governmental organization to hold a meeting in U.N. conference space, he received word that all conference space was now approved directly by the secretary-general's office. (The request was eventually rejected because, as an assistant to Thornburgh later reported, the secretary-general "does not like" the Moroccan ambassador, who was to chair the session.)

The French, who insisted it was time for a francophone to become secretary-general, were the key backers of Boutros-Ghali's bid for the secretary-generalship in 1991. Boutros-Ghali had been a member of the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques and a regular at Franco-African conferences. France and China had reportedly promised to veto a Northerner; Africans wanted a Sub-Saharan black, but were willing to live with an Egyptian, particularly since Boutros-Ghali had shown a soft spot for black African issues.

It was here that Boutros-Ghali's longstanding and enthusiastic affiliation with the Non-Aligned Movement paid handsome dividends. When the movement was organized in the mid-1950s, ostensibly to protect members from being sucked into conflicts of superpower rivalry, its mandate fit perfectly with Arab neutralism, wrote Boutros-Ghali at the time. "The Arab nation," he opined, "would never make common cause with the East or the West, because the Third World War would again be a war of the white, European, rich nations."

Founded by Nehru, Tito, and Nasser, the movement was initially marked by potent strains of pacifism (Mahatma Gandhi's influence was prominent). But as its pacifistic bent faded and decolonized African nations began to join in swelling numbers in the 1960s, the movement's tilt against the West became increasingly obvious. At its worst the Non-Aligned Movement became a champion of viscerally anti-Western, anti-American positions in international forums, its agenda often dominated by very much "aligned" Soviet clients like North Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam.

As the United States and its allies began to respond to the installation of eleven pro-Soviet dictatorships throughout the Third World during the late 1970s, the most adroit analysis that Boutros-Ghali could muster was to call for greater cohesion in the Non-Aligned Movement as "the superpowers have resumed their frightening arms race." He had contended early in his career that NATO was culpable for undermining the U.N.'s universal spirit, rupturing East-West relations, and subordinating diplomacy to the law of force.

Boutros-Ghali's judgment was shaped in part by hostility

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toward Israel. True, he never joined the ranks of strident anti-Israeli voices at Socialist International meetings he chaired, say regular attendees. And, as one of the few Egyptian diplomats who accompanied Sadat to the White House, he could even be viewed as a moderate. But "he's no Anwar Sadat," cautions one Boutros-Ghali acquaintance. Just last winter, he miffed Israel with efforts to force the Jewish state into welcoming back 100 deportees—without publicly acknowledging their association with Hamas, whose stated goal is to fight "until the last Jew in the world is exterminated." And in his writings, Boutros-Ghali has been able to find warm words for President Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania and Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, precisely because they shared his own concern about the "Zionist state expanding its territorial possessions."

But what Boutros-Ghali cares about most deeply is diminishing the role of the United States in the world—often under the euphemism of "democratizing international relations." Boutros-Ghali is not given to speaking of "democracy's victory" in the Cold War, but alludes instead to the "discredited ideologies of the past."

An eventual order of business is to stack the U.N. Security Council—because the "voice of the Third World" needs to be heard, as Boutros-Ghali said in Jakarta last summer. Last February, he visited Japanese Prime Minister Miyazawa in Tokyo to push Japan into playing a bigger role in U.N. peacekeeping, because, according to Boutros-Ghali, the world body is undergoing a "crisis of confidence," with some members fearful of a U.N. under the sway of a lone superpower. Since last Christmas he has been tugging at the reluctant Germans to come forth and help break the old Yalta order. While the Germans have remained ambivalent, aspiring Security Council members like India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Brazil, and—surprise—Egypt are enthusiastic about the secretary-general's plans. "Democratization must not only take hold inside a state," he told an audience at Boston's World Affairs Council this spring, "but *among* states in the international community." Boutros-Ghali had surprised participants at a New York council meeting of the Socialist International in late 1991, when, already campaigning for the U.N. post, he proposed that the SI issue a resolution calling for the elimination of veto power in the Security Council.

Predictably, Boutros-Ghali's efforts win praise from apparatchiks of the old Soviet nomenklatura. Former Soviet deputy foreign minister Vladimir Petrovsky—who in Moscow had served as the official spokesman on Andrei Sakharov during the scientist's banishment to Gorki—served early on as one of Boutros-Ghali's top deputies. (He has subsequently moved to a higher paying job in Geneva.) On the verge of Soviet collapse, Petrovsky had argued that the Soviet Union abandon its Cold War fight and help make the U.N. the centerpiece of a "new world order." Gorbachev himself, before leaving office, had looked to the U.N. as a counterweight to American strength, calling it "crazy" that Americans think "they can lead the world again." (He labeled the Wolfowitz memo "prehistoric.")

If the devolution of American power and the ascendancy of a "democratic" U.N. was supposed to be a harbinger of global peace, evidence from the former Yugoslavia has been scarce. Boutros-Ghali was jeered by hungry, war-weary residents in sub-zero temperatures during a trip to Sarajevo last winter. "May God help you in the new year as you helped us this year," read a sarcastic open letter from Sarajevo's citizens. Bosnian vice president Ejup Ganic charged the U.N. with a "complete failure," and said, "There is something missing here. . . . The Americans aren't present."

President Clinton has given a tentative nod to Boutros-Ghali's requests that U.S. troops make up the bulk of some 50,000 peacekeepers, if U.N. forces are sent to secure the gains of Serbian conquest. But when Clinton prepared to launch humanitarian airdrops with emergency supplies to besieged Slavic Muslims in Bosnia last January, Boutros-Ghali moved to delay the operation because he suspected a separate U.S. effort—even though Security Council resolutions had already empowered member states to deliver emergency aid to Bosnia "by all measures necessary." He lent his support to the plan only when Clinton assured him that the mission would be undertaken in "complete coordination" with the U.N.

The now-infamous warlord Gen. Mohammed Aidid has accused the secretary-general of having been too close to Mohammed Siad Barre, the deposed Somali president.

When NATO forces announced their readiness for action in Bosnia this summer, Boutros-Ghali demanded complete control, closely following the proposals of French ambassador Jean-Bernard Merimée that the deployment be "a U.N.-controlled operation, not a NATO-controlled operation with a U.N. blessing." In a letter to Christopher in early August, the secretary general laid out objections to NATO's choosing the time and place of air strikes. In his scheme, "regional organizations are to assist [the U.N.], not treat the U.N. as a subcontractor." Clinton acquiesced to the secretary-general's role as authorizer of any action in Bosnia, with prior review of targets entrusted to Lt. Gen. Jean Cot, senior U.N. commander in the Balkans. "The United Nations controls what happens in Bosnia," the president explained at a press conference earlier this summer. (By mid-September the president's advisers were backpedaling, having apparently come to realize that Americans would only support a commitment of as many as 15,000 to 20,000 troops if they were under NATO control and American command.)

While Boutros-Ghali has dragged his feet on Bosnia, in Somalia he has been expanding the U.N.'s mandate to encompass "nation-building"—with no better results. Stone-hurling

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locals in Mogadishu chased his white motorcade this winter, later cornering him in a U.N. compound. (When the Pakistani commander in charge couldn't be found, U.S. Marines were asked to liberate the U.N. chief.) American helicopters have been dodging and returning fire over the streets of Mogadishu some eight months after special envoy Robert Oakley declared that "deaths from starvation are almost gone now" and "the U.S. mission largely accomplished." In Somalia, Boutros-Ghali has been equally interested in operational control, to the constant chagrin of the Pentagon.

The Pentagon fended off the most ambitious proposals by Clinton's State Department and National Security staff in August to meet Boutros-Ghali's demands for a U.N. "rapid deployment force." However, Morton Halperin, who awaits Senate confirmation to head up peacekeeping at the Pentagon, has already signed on to the idea that American armed forces be assigned "to the service of the Security Council on a case-by-case basis." And U.N. ambassador Madeleine Albright returned from Somalia this summer beaming like someone who'd taken part in the opening ceremonies of an Olympics. She told ABC's Ted Koppel: "You know there are now 27 nations serving in Somalia, and it's a matter of great pride, I think, as you walk around and see these soldiers in their own uniforms with the U.N. patch on one arm and their flag on the other."

Those who bear the consequences don't always see it that way. A former U.S. Army intelligence officer just back from U.N. duty in the Sinai notes that Norwegians, for example—under whose command he worked in Egypt—simply can't comprehend the security concerns American troops must be attuned to when deployed abroad, especially in the Middle East ("No one gets their jollies killing a Norwegian like they do snuffing an American or British soldier," he says). One has to face the reality, he continues, that "Colombians or Fijians may not have the same level of professionalism or training as American GIs." In Somalia, Pakistanis have distinguished themselves for being easily distracted when off-duty female American soldiers jog by in shorts and T-shirts.

Marine Lt. Gen. Robert Johnston, then-commander of U.S. forces in Somalia, said last December that the "massive undertaking" of disarming Somali forces was "certainly not part of my mission." Now, State Department spokesman David Shinn says that U.N. troops "basically are re-creating a country. This has never been done before in the history of the world, at least the modern world." Algerian diplomat Mohammed Sahnoun, who served as Boutros-Ghali's personal envoy to Mogadishu before resigning in protest, now likens the aid operation to a military occupation.

Other Middle Eastern sources worry that Boutros-Ghali is guided by links to Egyptian interests in the region. Boutros-Ghali had been responsible for a Sub-Saharan portfolio at the Egyptian foreign ministry. The now-infamous warlord Gen. Mohammed Aidid has accused the secretary-general of having been too close to Mohammed Siad Barre, the deposed Somali president. He also contends that the

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U.N. chief's bias—against him and in favor of his rival Mohammed Ali Mahdi—stems from Boutros-Ghali's time as deputy prime minister.

It's in the Third World, of course, especially Africa, that Boutros-Ghali's primary interests lie. While he seems never to have been bothered much by Moscow's Iron Curtain cutting Europe in two, the threat of "an iron curtain between North and South" raises his hackles. In the post–Cold War world, Boutros-Ghali often warns, "East-West rapprochement . . . [must] not take place at the expense of the Third World." Deploring the North's "marginalization of Africa," for instance, he contends that "the rich should accept being less rich, so that the poor can become less poor." His inclinations have surprised no one, though his acerbic remark to the Security Council last year about Bosnia being just a "rich man's war" caused alarm.

It is not at all clear whether Boutros-Ghali has ever broken with the Nasserite ideology that bureaucratic authoritarianism is essential to the erosion of inequalities. He apparently accepts the assertion that Western industrialized nations are responsible for Third World poverty and economic backwardness. (Nasser viewed aid as a moral "tax" to be levied on the West.) Boutros-Ghali dismisses the notion that industrialized nations should be able to impose financial and economic conditions on aid, and disapproves of linking economic assistance to democracy and respect for human rights. "Political pluralism," he says, is the West's "new miraculous remedy, [as if Africa could not] judge for itself the kind of democratic system best suited to its conditions and needs!"

Boutros-Ghali likes to boast of his own democratic credentials, to be sure. He has opened an office dedicated to democracy efforts at the U.N. in New York and sees to it that any speech he gives is adorned with rhetorical bows to "promoting democracy and protecting human rights." Even so, he is probably "more interested in collective rights than individual rights," concedes one sympathetic American human rights expert.

Boutros-Ghali first irked the human rights community by apparently striking a deal with the military-dominated Suharto regime in Indonesia, that if Jakarta agreed to admit the secretary-general's personal envoy on a mission to investigate the November 1991 massacre in East Timor, the U.N. chief would subsequently see to it that the report remained private. When representatives of non-governmental human rights groups met with Boutros-Ghali recently in New York and charged that a report that no one sees has little value, Boutros-Ghali tartly replied, "*I* get to see the report." Last year he attended the Non-Aligned Movement's tenth summit in Jakarta, where Indonesia's oligarchy had its turn to hold the rotating chairmanship.

This summer Boutros-Ghali bent to pressure from China and barred the Dalai Lama (who fled Tibet when China annexed the region in 1959) from speaking at the U.N.-sponsored World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. The U.N. also barred certain organizations from holding press conferences on U.N. grounds. This debacle came on the heels of a bizarre episode in May, when Boutros-Ghali blocked Chinese dissident Shen Tong from appearing at U.N. headquarters in New York, even though the Tiananmen Square activist, a political philosophy graduate student at Boston University, had been invited by the U.N. Correspondents Association to speak.

It was the first time such a ban at the press club had been imposed. An aide to the secretary-general who oversees the U.N.'s Public Information department, warned that if reporters didn't heed his boss's decision, Boutros-Ghali would recommend that the press association be abolished. The secretary-general ordered the room locked where Shen was scheduled to speak and posted guards outside. Future invitations to "objectionable people" would require prior approval by his department, the assistant added.

During the McCarthy years, Dag Hammarskjöld had once vowed to the press association that they could invite whomever they pleased without any fear of censorship. Boutros Boutros-Ghali has chosen to do things differently. A New World Order, it seems, demands an array of new world rules. ❐

THREE LIMERICKS

Member of the Club?

Will Bill Clinton discover today
yet another half-brother? He may,
  for the family's that big.
  I suspect Porky Pig
may be one—but he's too proud to say.

The Clinton Touch

When he brushes his teeth, he creates
countless jobs. When he goes out on dates—
  Oops! We'll leave that part out.
  Still, his haircuts, no doubt,
must employ, at high wages, whole states.

"I Feel Your Pain"

It is something I cannot conceal,
my compassion. So let's make a deal:
  I'll inflict new taxation,
  you'll display resignation—
and the pain that I cause you, I'll feel.

—Tom Riley

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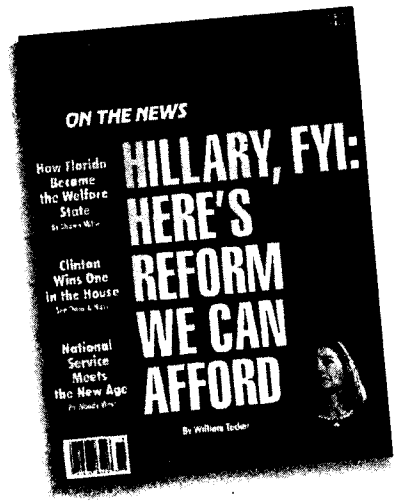

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Geoffrey Norman

Superfund as Godzilla

Al Gore and the EPA have created a monster that even sucks the blood out of socialist businessmen in Vermont.

Biff Mithoffer is a genial, energetic man and something of a contradiction. Strictly on appearances, he belongs to that tribe of lost sixties souls who settled in Vermont and other rural areas, sometimes to prosper but more often merely to hang on. Mithoffer wears his hair in a ponytail, lets his beard grow wild, and has had an earring for years now. He's a fine downhill skier who shuns fancy ski-wear for carpenter's overalls when he is on the mountain. He attends town meetings faithfully, drives a Saab, and voted for Bernie Sanders, the only formal socialist in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Mithoffer is also a businessman. Countercultural businessmen are not unusual in Vermont; it is the home, after all, of Ben & Jerry's, with its one-percent-for-peace plan. Mithoffer's line, however, is a little less glamorous than Cherry Garcia or Rain Forest Crunch ice cream. Mithoffer owns trucks and his business, East Mountain Transport, hauls things—chiefly trash.

Mithoffer started in heavy construction in the seventies, and as more and more of his business turned on hauling his own trash, he saw an opportunity and took it. Vermont was busy closing landfills as environmental hazards. A proposed incinerator went broke after a long fight with regulators and environmentalists. (Mithoffer was among the creditors.) So there was money to be made hauling waste out of state, to dumps that would take it, and Mithoffer moved into the niche. Typically, he became interested in the possibilities of recycling—for both business and cultural reasons. Mithoffer is probably as green as any businessman is likely to get, but he remains a businessman.

He studied recycling extensively and traveled to other parts of the country and to Europe to research methods and systems. He also launched another business, this one called East Mountain Environmental Services, which is building recycling facilities in Nantucket, Massachusetts, and in the Berkshires. He took over a landfill in Sunderland that had been closed for environmental reasons, and now operates it as a recycling center, where people come in new Volvos and rusted pickups to drop off their newspapers, wine bottles, milk jugs, and tin cans free of charge. An estimated 25 percent of the area's solid waste goes through this transfer station rather than into landfills.

Mithoffer's trucks then transport the waste to collection centers where he sells it at a loss. He believes he has a civic duty to promote recycling but, being a businessman, he also considers these the start-up years. Eventually, he expects, tighter regulations and higher dumping fees will force more and more people into recycling—and that side of his business will become profitable.

"I believe the next big fight we face in this country will be over the environment," he says, and by just about any-

Geoffrey Norman is editor-at-large of FYI.

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body's common sense measure, Biff Mithoffer would have to be counted as one of the good guys in the struggle he foresees. He talks the talk, certainly, but he is also actually *doing* something. You could easily imagine Mithoffer accepting one of those awards for environmental good citizenship . . . small businessman of the year, or something like it.

The Environmental Protection Agency, however, sees things differently. In one of those strikingly perverse twists that big government specializes in, Mithoffer has been identified by the EPA as one of the bad guys.

"According to them," he says, bitterly, "I am a criminal. But I am a special kind of criminal, because I am not allowed to stand up in court and defend myself. All I am allowed to do is plead guilty and accept my punishment. Even though I never broke any law."

Mithoffer finds himself imprisoned in the Kafkaesque world of Superfund, which Vice President Albert Gore considers his proudest legislative accomplishment. The Superfund law was pushed hardest in the Senate in 1980 by Vermont Republican Robert Stafford, who has since retired. The legislation passed in the heat and hysteria generated by the chemical contamination of Love Canal. There was a general, urgent sense that the country needed to *do something*. The something was CERCLA—the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, the central idea of which was to clean up toxic waste sites and make the polluters, themselves, pay.

He talks the talk, certainly, but he is also actually doing *something. You could easily imagine Mithoffer accepting one of those awards for environmental good citizenship.*

A trust fund—Superfund—was to be established out of special taxes on petroleum and assorted chemicals. This fund was to be used to cleanup sites, after which the polluters would be billed their share of the costs by the EPA. Or, the polluters could concede responsibility and accomplish the cleanup themselves. This is the preferred course, since nobody wants to be put in the position of letting the government decide just how much to spend on something when it will be passing the bill along to you.

In practice, then, the EPA identifies the polluters of a particular site, then herds them into a group, and the group pays. Anyone who has put anything into a site, no matter how small the amount, can be held accountable. The EPA uses confidential informants—who can be embittered former employees, or even business rivals—to locate those it considers responsible. And it was one of them, probably, who fingered Mithoffer for the EPA.

Mithoffer hadn't been aware there was a problem until a certified letter arrived in September 1991 at the old, unpainted clapboard headquarters building of EMT near the entrance to the old Sunderland landfill. The letter was from the Boston office of the EPA—something called a 104E, which is one of those government documents that, like a notice from the IRS announcing an audit, turns a citizen's knees to water. According to the document, Mithoffer was considered a Potentially Responsible Party in the contamination of an old dump that the EPA had classified as a Superfund site. Under the law, Mithoffer was required to sign the enclosed form and return it within ten days. He would be fined $25,000 a day for every day that he was not in compliance.

The notice took Mithoffer completely by surprise. Nobody from the EPA had talked to him. He was not aware that he was even under investigation.

According to Indira Balkasoon of the Boston EPA office, when the EPA opens a Superfund investigation and attempts to identify those who will be notified as Potentially Responsible Parties ("PRPs" among Superfund cognoscenti), it looks at "manifests and other old records, talks to former employees of the dump, and to people who might have worked for somebody who used the dump . . . or their neighbors."

Actually, this snooping is usually done by an outside consulting firm. Eventually, the PRPs pay the bill for the investigation. In this case it came to an astonishing $276,000—to produce a group of twenty-seven PRPs. But, then, like all massive government programs, Superfund generates a lot of loose money which outside consultants and lawyers slop on like hogs at a trough. One consulting company to EPA that worked on Love Canal billed taxpayers $167,000 for office parties, including a Christmas bash complete with reindeer suits and a dance instructor. The company's president asserted that his "charges to the government are fair to the taxpayer."

The site for which Mithoffer was considered "responsible" was an inactive landfill that had been operated for several years by the town of Bennington, Vermont. The landfill had been approved by the state and run under state guidelines for several years before it was closed under the terms of state law. It had been a legal dump in every sense. Legally opened, legally operated, legally closed. But there were concerns about possible contamination of ground water and deep underground aquifers. Industries in Bennington, including the Eveready Corporation, had dumped materials that might leach into the water and cause problems.

Which seemed, to Mithoffer, to let him off the hook. He had never put anything in the dump, which had been closed in 1988, two years before he ever got into the trash-hauling business. If the EPA—or anyone else—had a problem with

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the old dump site, it was not because of anything he had done.

Mithoffer heard from several other small businesses that had received 104Es from the EPA and had simply thrown them away and gone on about their work on the assumption that they were too small to matter and, anyway, if the government was serious enough to actually come after them, then it was all over anyway. Theirs may have been the more prudent course of action. Mithoffer, however, considered it his "duty as a citizen to return the form. And, anyway, I didn't see how I could be held responsible for any contamination caused by that dump since I'd never put *anything* in it. Not a single sheet of newspaper."

But he *had* bought three trucks, four containers, and portions of some garbage pickup routes from another small hauler who had used the dump. In buying that equipment, Mithoffer had also acquired all the liabilities that went with it, according to a legal doctrine he later learned was called "successor liability."

As it turns out, the man from whom Mithoffer bought the equipment, and who *had* dumped things—legally—in the old landfill, was one of those who threw his 104E in the trash.

Says Mithoffer: "They never bothered him again."

Mithoffer returned the form, and several months passed, during which he heard nothing from EPA. When he was finally contacted, it was to inform him that either he or his representative (read: lawyer) must attend a meeting of those with potential liability. The meeting would be held in Boston, in the offices of the EPA.

"Nobody asked if the date and time were convenient," he says. "Also, I didn't have a lawyer and couldn't afford one. I employ fourteen people and own five trucks. I don't keep someone on retainer. And I couldn't take the time, myself, to go to a lot of meetings."

So he called an old friend in New York, who is a lawyer, and he asked for help.

Christopher Bartle is a graduate of Yale Law, and has known Mithoffer since high school. His practice involves, chiefly, real estate. But he did some research and advised Mithoffer to send someone to the meeting with instructions to be co-operative, state his case, and see what developed.

"I thought there was a good chance Biff would be dropped from the list of PRPs, just on common-sense grounds, since he hadn't put anything in the dump and, just as important in the eyes of the EPA, he didn't have the kind of deep pockets they look for. Textron, Eveready, and the city of Bennington were also listed as PRPs and they had the money. I told Biff that, worst case, it might cost him nine or ten thousand dollars to go through the first step and then get out. That was real money to him. But he could survive it."

Bartle had woefully underestimated the EPA.

On Bartle's advice, Mithoffer sent Bob Stannard to Boston. Stannard is not a lawyer—as he is quick to point out—but he had been an elected member of the Vermont House of Representatives, one of the few remaining citizens' legislatures in the country. The Vermont legislature meets for sixty days a year. Members leave their homes and stay in rented rooms or with friends in Montpelier while they are doing the people's business. They are paid about $480 a week plus some modest expenses. They have no offices, other than their desks in the legislative chambers. No staffs. They write their own letters and, often, answer their own phones. It is good nineteenth-century civics, perhaps, but it does not prepare you for dealing with the federal government.

Stannard drove down to Boston in his own car and stayed with his in-laws. The $300-an-hour lawyers representing the other PRPs flew in first class and stayed at the Copley. From the start, Mithoffer and Stannard were out of their league. When he arrived in the EPA offices, Stannard found he was the only non-lawyer in the group. Most of the others did Superfund work exclusively and were handling as many as a dozen other cases. The lawyers were cordial and even personally sympathetic. Stannard thought, momentarily, that things might be worked out painlessly.

Stannard drove down to Boston in his own car and stayed with his in-laws. The $300-an-hour lawyers representing the other PRPs flew in first class and stayed at the Copley.

After an hour-long wait, a bristling lawyer from EPA entered the room and announced that it was up to the people in the room to form a group and begin assessing each member's degree of accountability for the problems at the Bennington site. The group would conduct a survey called a Remedial Investigative Feasibility Study (RIFS), which would determine what, exactly, the problems at the site were and how they could be best cleaned up. The proposed cleanup was subject to EPA approval. Just about everything was subject to EPA approval. The lawyers in the room merely nodded as the man from EPA spoke.

With his briefing complete, the EPA lawyer left the room. Stannard followed him, thinking he would be able to get the man alone and explain that EMT shouldn't be part of any group because it hadn't done any polluting.

The lawyer held up his hand, palm out, cutting Stannard off before he could get started.

"I am not," he said, "discussing this matter with *any* individual PRP. Go back in the room and join the group."

Then he turned and walked away, leaving Stannard alone in the hallway. "Up until that moment," Stannard says, "I had assumed we were dealing with an agency that was basically sympathetic and reasonable."

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The question for Mithoffer, Stannard, and EMT became: Should they join the group or not? Mithoffer again consulted Bartle, who was by now his lawyer in this matter, though he was not sending out bills for his services.

"I told Biff that he had two choices," Bartle says. "He could join the group or . . . he could join the group."

Bartle had done further research and understood more clearly how Superfund works. (Nobody understands the law perfectly, least of all those who wrote it, who claim that it was never the law's *intent* to persecute small operators.)

"The whole idea," Bartle says, "is to cast the widest possible net. Everything is set up to get as many people into the group as possible. So the EPA starts after everybody who may have put anything into the dump or anybody who acquired the liabilities of anyone who ever put anything into the dump. They'll go after banks that have loaned money to people who used a site. They'll go after people like Biff. Then, once the initial group has been formed, the people who are in it can start looking around for more parties that can be brought in. They'll want to spread the costs around. So if the group decides that you are a responsible party and should be included, and you refuse to join, then you can be sued by the group. If you lose, you get to join the group *and* you get to pay what it cost the group to sue you.

"Furthermore, if the group sues one party and loses, then it goes after another party and also loses, and then goes after still another party and *wins*, then that party pays the cost of all the lawsuits. So there is, needless to say, a tremendous incentive to join. The parties already in the group want it to be as large as possible, so the costs can be spread around. Also, the time spent forming the group is a convenient delay, a way of postponing—sometimes for years—the cleanup and its heavy costs. For big companies, with large exposure, the legal costs of dragging out this stage of the process are bearable. For a small trash hauler like Biff, they could be crushing."

Mithoffer had a further incentive to join the group. Some of his competitors were members of the group. They had dumped material in the landfill so, perhaps, they should have been included. (Even though they had dumped *legally*.) If Mithoffer refused to join, they would certainly be in favor of a suit. It would be, for them, a matter not of justice but of sound business practice.

So Mithoffer joined, voluntarily but reluctantly. His assessment of the costs was initially put at 3 percent.

Bartle's advice at this time was to stick it out, be a good citizen, do your share, and bide your time. In six months, perhaps, the process would reach a stage where, under arbitration, Mithoffer could get out. It might be through a declaratory judgment or what is called a *de minimus* settlement. This is lawyer-Latin for a deal in which a party is allowed out of the group by the EPA in return for a small settlement.

"In a rational world," Bartle says, "we would have been let out on a declaratory judgment. To hold Biff responsible for the cleanup of that site—and according to the principle of joint and several liability, if other parties could not be found, he could be held liable for *all* of the cleanup, which might come to $50 million—to say that because he bought those trucks and containers . . . that pushes the law to absurdity.

"But, I found, the EPA does not like to let people out on declaratories. They don't like to admit they made a mistake. So I told Biff to hang in there and hope for a *de minimus*—which he ought to get in maybe six months."

Bartle was still not aware of "just how lawyer-intensive the whole process is. I have been a lawyer for eleven years and I've never seen anything like it. People were appalled by the legal overhead involved in some of the LBOs of the eighties; but the legal costs of a Superfund case are much higher. Very much."

Having joined the group, Mithoffer and Stannard set out to be active, cooperative members.

"I told Bob to do everything he could to cultivate good will for EMT within the group," Bartle says. "And he became the point man."

Stannard, the able small-town politician, did a good job. He was named to the group's steering committee and began spending more and more of his time on group business. A stack of correspondence, faxes, and legal documents began to grow like a moist toadstool in a corner of his office. The pile reached two feet, then three, and finally five. There were long conference calls, quick trips to Boston, meetings. If Mithoffer was not paying a lawyer to handle his EPA problem (Bartle was still advising him at no charge), then he was certainly paying a full-time employee to devote more than half his time and energies to the case.

Six months passed and the group was still bogged down

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in the work of locating additional PRPs and deciding on a common counsel. The group was nowhere near ready to decide on allocation of responsibility for the RIFS. Mithoffer had already been billed $7,000 for his share of the group's expenses.

"And there were other costs, too," he says. "You are living under a financial cloud when one of these things is going on. You go to the bank and say you want to borrow money for a new truck. They see you are involved in a Superfund case . . . well, you've got a problem."

Eighteen months after Bartle had told him to hang in there for six months, Mithoffer received another bill from the group for his share of expenses: $11,000. And, he was told, there was another on the way, this one for $15,000. So he was already in for over $30,000, and would have owed another $30,000 if Bartle had been keeping tabs for his legal work.

No contaminants had been cleaned up. No plan for removing them had been developed. It would be another six months, at least, before the group could agree on a plan for the study that would produce the plan for the cleanup. Everything, up until then, was merely prelude.

Consider the case of Bennington. The town, like many distressed small cities in New England, is looking for some new source of vitality, now that the mills have closed and the manufacturing jobs that employed many of its 12,000 citizens are gone. Not all of these people can become Superfund lawyers.

Four years after the dump it had operated was declared a Superfund site, the town had spent over three-quarters of a million dollars—$350,000 of it on legal fees and over $400,000 on PRP business ($20,000 just for postage, copying, and faxes). It had agreed to a 17 percent allocation for the cost of the RIFS, which would run about $1.5 million. The RIFS, if accepted by the EPA, would recommend some form of cleanup. Just getting to that point, then, would cost the town over a million dollars. If the cost of the cleanup reaches $50 million, which is one preliminary estimate, then the town will have to issue bonds to raise the money.

Stuart Hurd, the Bennington town manager, says, "So far, we have found the necessary funds by deferring other projects. But it has worked out to about a 20 cent increase in the tax rolls. Also, because we had to use money we had set aside for a reappraisal on Superfund, we lost over $200,000 in state aid to education.

"Another problem is that, by putting them both in the PRP group, the process makes antagonists of the town government and some of the local industries. There is also the possible negative effect on the recruitment of new industries. . . . It could be worse, though," Hurd says. "In Lyndonville, Vermont, they spent $4 million to find out the site there was not a threat. They didn't get the money back, either."

Mithoffer, realizing he also was not going to get any of his money back, and that "it could just as easily be six years as six months before this thing ends," decided to drop out of the PRP group.

"We just couldn't afford to keep paying the assessment. We tried to be decent about it. We told them we'd still come to all the meetings and do anything we could. We even offered to set up some kind of payment schedule, the way you do with the IRS. But we couldn't live with those assessments. I mean, we are a little business. I run it. My wife does the books. We've got Bob and a guy to answer the phones. Our trucks and our drivers. I could liquidate the whole thing and maybe make a $25 donation to the PRP group."

The group did not agree to Mithoffer's proposal. In their misery, PRPs like company and plenty of it. The group continued to send bills and threatened to sue. Third-party suits, as they are called by the EPA, are a common feature on the Superfund landscape. Estimates of future Superfund expenditures range from $125 billion to $1.25 *trillion,* with something like 85 percent of the money going to "transaction costs," i.e., lawyer's fees.

Since most people are opposed to welfare for lawyers, Superfund has become an embarrassment even to ardent environmentalists. In a recent two-day span, the *Washington Post* editorialized for the "reform" of the law (good intent, bad execution, which is getting to be kind of an old, lame excuse) and the *New York Times* ran a story reporting that many towns would rather live with the contamination than endure the typical EPA cleanup, which takes anywhere from seven to ten years and costs an average of $25 million. Even President Clinton has said of Superfund, "We all know it doesn't work. Superfund has been a disaster."

For Mithoffer, there came a moment last November when he was finally allowed to do something he had wanted to do since the day he received his 104E by certified mail—stand up and explain to someone in authority that he was being wronged. The EPA wouldn't listen. So maybe Senator Jim Jeffords, a Vermont Republican, might.

Jeffords, then a member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, was coming to Bennington to hold hearings on EPA and Superfund. The program faces congressional reauthorization next year, and for all its problems out in the country, Superfund has strong support in Washington, especially from the environmental lobby. Jeffords, a very wet Republican, is sensitive to the Beltway zeitgeist. But Vermont has eight Superfund sites, including the old Bennington landfill. The purpose of the hearing, according to Jeffords, was to gather some "input [that] will help with this reauthorization process." More likely, the purpose of the hearings was to show his constituents that—in the locutions of politics—"he shared their concerns." Like most people in his line of work, Jeffords wants it both ways if he is to have it any way at all.

Still, some sixty or seventy people came to the hearings at the Bennington Ramada, most of them to blow off steam.

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They had been through the wringer with the EPA and wanted the senator to hear about it. Jeffords opened the show with the usual bromide: "I think that most people agree that the intent of Superfund is good."

Jeffords also asked, not very eloquently, that "witnesses denounce any criticisms in discussion where the program is working effectively. EPA is trying to implement this program effectively, and I think it is important to recognize where its efforts have been successful."

The witnesses, including Biff Mithoffer, found plenty to say without knocking Superfund where it was working effectively. But first, they had to listen to Merrill S. Hohman, EPA regional director. He spoke in the euphemistic mode favored by government strong-arm men.

"EPA," Hohman said, "has made full use of the strict joint and several liability provided in the statute to encourage PRPs to do the Superfund work, as opposed to relying primarily on the trust fund."

And: "The PRPs at those sites have agreed to reimburse us for most of our past costs and to pay the cost of EPA oversight of the studies." To officials like Hohman, threats of $25,000-a-day fines amount to "encouragement" in getting people to "agree" to do what the EPA wants done. One witness would call it extortion.

A stack of correspondence, faxes, and legal documents began to grow like a moist toadstool in a corner of his office. The pile reached two feet, then three, and finally five.

Hohman complimented the PRPs and the state of Vermont for "cooperating," and said such conduct "warrants our thanks."

Stuart Hurd, Bennington's town manager, saw it a little differently. "Throughout the process," he testified, "EPA has strong-armed the PRP group by imposing unreasonable deadlines and threatened penalties. And EPA's responses come slowly or not at all."

Jeffords thanked him for his "very moving statement."

Then it was Mithoffer's turn. He began by assuring everyone that he was "not a lawyer," and concluded by describing how it felt to lay off one of his drivers. "I can see that man sitting at the table and saying to his wife, 'I don't have a job.' And I can see his wife crying . . ."

Mithoffer said things he's been wanting to say to someone in authority for a long time. The audience stood and cheered when he finished. The applause even got to Jeffords, who started to grill Hohman. "If I buy someone's truck," Jeffords asked him, "and he used that truck to dump, am I responsible for what he dumped?"

To which Hohman, striking the perfect regulatory note, answered: "I don't know." Nobody knows, which is what makes Superfund such a nightmare. If the regional director himself does not know the answer to that question, how can the owner of a small trucking business be expected to? But the difference is, when Hohman doesn't know, he gets to keep his job and gets a raise for seniority. When Mithoffer doesn't know, it can cost him his business and his employees their jobs.

Hohman went on to say, "That decision is made on a case-by-case basis. This particular case showed that he did have liability and he did join in the settlement and is now part of the overall group." Again, no mention of the $25,000-a-day fine. Like any good inquisitor, Hohman celebrates the confession and neglects the torture that preceded it.

Jeffords also asked when the EPA stopped pursuing a party. Hohman answered that, well, there was an ability-to-pay provision in the law. The EPA was not, after all, in the business of bankrupting companies. "Frankly, if we can help them stay in business, Senator, it insures an income stream."

Generous of them.

Jeffords pronounced the meeting a success, but warned that Congress was "terrified" of opening up the Superfund legislation for changes because the program might be "gutted."

Nothing much has changed since the meeting. Mithoffer still lives in a kind of nether world, hoping that he will not be sued by the PRP group and that, when the RIFS is completed, the EPA might be willing to grant him a *de minimus* settlement so he can at last put the whole thing behind him.

Stuart Hurd says that, since the meeting, "we have seen a relative softening of the EPA toward our group. They are not so combative. For a while, they treated us like criminals."

Mithoffer disagrees: "No," he says, sitting in his office one afternoon, nearly a year after the hearing that accomplished nothing more than maybe getting the EPA to behave a bit more civilly toward American citizens who have broken no laws. "They treat you worse than a criminal. At least a criminal knows what law he has broken and gets to stand up and defend himself. Someone has to prove that he did something that was against the law. He gets to face his accuser and is judged by a jury of his peers.

"I don't have any of those rights. Criminals have rights. PRPs don't. Criminals get specific punishments. So many years in jail. A PRP's sentence lasts until the EPA is tired of screwing with him, or figures there isn't any blood left."

Then he points out one last irony. In the time since he received his 104E, his company has been responsible for recycling tons and tons of solid waste. During that time, at a cost of millions, the EPA has not removed a single shovelful of dirt from the Bennington Superfund site. "Not one." ❐

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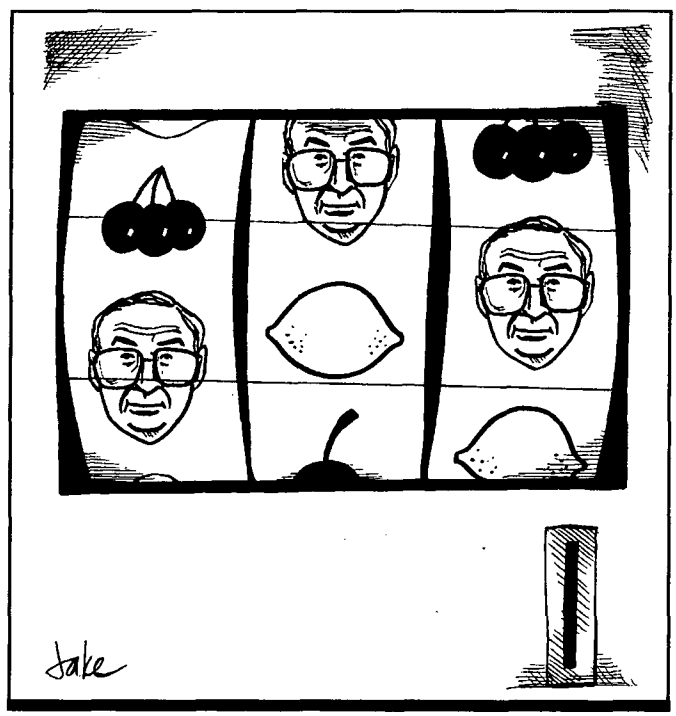
James Ring Adams

Clintonism in One State

Gov. Lowell Weicker won liberal plaudits when he passed Connecticut's first-ever income tax two years ago. It is destroying the state's economy. His next move: casino gambling. (Oh, yes—he's just decided not to run for re-election.)



The Mashantucket Pequot Indians, the luckiest 200 people in America, hit paydirt in a quirk in federal law, and turned their high-stakes bingo game in Ledyard into the nation's most profitable casino. In spite of massive layoffs at nearby Groton, headquarters of the nuclear submarine fleet, the casino drew enough business to make Connecticut's southeastern corner the fastest-growing part of the state.

The casino's managers wanted to keep the game going by introducing the next wave in gaming technology, video slot machines, so they decided on a bold stroke, not only to get permission for the games but to establish a monopoly. The Mashantuckets offered Governor Lowell P. Weicker, Jr. a cash contribution of $100 million toward his budget deficit in return for exclusive rights to the slots. The money in theory compensated the state for the taxes it might have collected if other gaming outlets, like jai alai frontons and dog-racing parks, could also install the machines. In mid-January, Weicker, a model of political correctness, gladly took the deal.

But Weicker signed the offer with "the sovereign nation of the Mashantucket Pequots" just as Las Vegas gaming mogul Steve Wynn began to lobby seriously for plans to build casinos in Hartford and Bridgeport. Famous for his Golden Nugget and Mirage resorts, Wynn was born in New Haven but moved at an early age as his father, a professional manager of bingo parlors, followed the charity gambling business to upstate New York. Wynn says his business inspiration is Walt Disney, and his Mirage Resort is a Las Vegas fantasyland, where white tigers live in a habitat along the corridor to the casino, dolphins sport in their own pool, and an imitation volcano spews 50-foot flames at night. Connecticut friends saw him as the savior of the state's run-down cities. Eager to gain a new frontier for gaming, Wynn pumped a million dollars last spring into lobbying for legislative approval.

Along the way, he made a counter-offer for the video slot business. Topping the Mashantuckets, he said that he and his coalition of fronton and dog-park owners would guarantee the state a take of $130 million in slot video taxes; if the collections on that tax fell short, he personally would arrange to make up the difference.

A subsidy from Indians was one thing. But an identical arrangement with Las Vegas raised Governor Weicker's moral hackles. Not only did he spurn Wynn, he broke up the gaming coalition by offering a tax break to the jai alai players and greyhound runners. In a capitol coup, legislative leaders refused to schedule a vote on casino gam-

James Ring Adams is business editor of the Waterbury Republican-American.

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bling, and Wynn left the Connecticut political tables a lot like his own customers, considerably lighter in his pocketbook.

The Mashantuckets had paid their first installment by the end of the legislative session, allowing Governor Weicker to declare a budget surplus. The state's solons spent their final days in Hartford squabbling over the division of the "Indian money."

That the state that once boasted the most vibrant economy in the Northeast should turn to gambling for its salvation represents a comedown of classical proportions. There is a lively debate over the causes of this collapse, and many, including the politicians in charge, want to portray it as the result of external pressures. But evidence is building that lays the blame on the kind of economic policy that now dominates the Clinton administration. Connecticut has destroyed its economic recovery by increasing taxes by a billion dollars and above all by imposing a personal income tax where none existed before. As private enterprise wanes, the state government is trying to save jobs by a form of state industrial policy that some of Clinton's economic advisers would find congenial. Connecticut now may be the future of America.

The Connecticut Business and Industry Association endorsed the tax and still supports it. Far from class treason, Weicker's policy drew significant support from wealthy businessmen.

How to Destroy an Economy

The Nutmeg State has been a center of Yankee commerce and invention since the eighteenth century. (Its nickname referred to a less savory side of its ingenuity; farmers spent their winters carving wood to look like nutmeg cloves, which pedlars would sell in their summer rounds to unsuspecting Midwesterners.) As the home of Samuel Colt and Eli Whitney, it was a hotbed of manufacturing technology.

Since World War II, the state had flourished both as a center of the defense industry and a low-tax haven for high-income commuters from New York. As its neighbors imposed state income taxes, Connecticut's legislature, dominated by the colorful conservative J. Henry Roraback of Litchfield County, rejected the measure as a matter of faith and policy. Fugitive New Yorkers moved their homes and their millions into J. Henry's backyard. Connecticut's per capita income rose to the highest in the nation, a distinction it still holds, barely.

All this changed in the last recession, which began in February 1989 and in Connecticut has not yet really ended. As of the latest labor reports, the state had lost around 200,000 jobs. Much of its defense industry collapsed with the end of the Cold War. Efforts to establish new industries, of which there are many, labor against some invisible drag. The national recovery has passed the state by. Income growth in Connecticut is now the lowest in the nation, and it may soon yield its status as the wealthiest state to New Jersey. Connecticut now lags in all the indicators of recovery, and was the only state last year reporting a net population loss.

Some of the state's decline followed organically from its economic flowering. Connecticut's largest private employers included United Technologies Corporation and the Electric Boat division of General Dynamics, and for decades there had been worries about excessive dependence on the defense industry. These didn't come solely from the left; too much of the state's manufacturing base had developed the bad habits engendered by military procurement. Even worse, the image of wealthy suburbanites and Yale-educated gentleman farmers obscured serious problems of urban poverty. Welfare dependency in Hartford, the capital, touched more than 20 percent of the population, and the social disintegration in Bridgeport and New Haven accelerated with the growth of the drug gangs.

Yet a sharp break in policy in the last two years has exacerbated all these problems. It is an obvious cause of this dramatic decline, but the state is extremely reluctant to face it. In mid-1991, newly elected Governor Weicker bullied and harangued the legislature into passing a state personal income tax. Never mind that a broad spectrum of economists warned that any kind of tax increase would intensify the recession. The income tax was billed as a conservative pro-business policy, pushed by a myopic business lobby.

Passing the Income Tax

Lowell Weicker is a wealthy liberal Republican from the posh executive suburbs of Fairfield County. (His family derived its wealth from the Squibb pharmaceutical corporation.) A gadfly fixture in the U.S. Senate, he lost his seat in 1988 to the popular former New Haven congressman and state attorney general Joseph Lieberman. After a stint running a Squibb-financed foundation, in 1990 he entered a three-way race for governor as an independent. The Democrats were discredited by the red ink generated by Governor William O'Neill; their candidate finished last. The Republican, John Rowland, wasn't helped any by his position as a member of Congress, even though he campaigned strenuously against a state income tax. Weicker, who kept quiet on the issue, rode the same anti-incumbent tide that had defeated him two years earlier, and won with 40 percent of the vote.

Weicker inherited a $7 billion budget with a built-in and growing deficit of nearly $500 million. He telegraphed his solution even before his inauguration, when he chose William J. Cibes, Jr. as his chief budget adviser. Cibes, professor of government at Connecticut College, former assis-

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tant minority leader and head of the finance committee in the state legislature, was one of the legislature's leading advocates for an income tax. When Cibes and Weicker took office in January 1991, the deficit projections were topping $1 billion.

But none of this indicated just how stubbornly Weicker would fight for the tax. In February, the governor announced a budget based on the income tax. By May a coalition of Republicans and Senate Democrats had solidified behind a budget balanced by everything but a levy on incomes. To avoid that political taboo, the legislators were willing to expand the base of the sales tax, already a high 8 percent, raise business taxes, and defer paying off the previous year's budget deficit. Weicker vetoed their first budget in June. In early July, at the start of the new fiscal year, the senate killed the income tax again. Weicker responded by giving 20,000 state workers a furlough and closing state parks over the Fourth of July weekend. In early August he vetoed another budget, denouncing his opponents with a characteristic dose of insult and self-righteousness. "Only those residing on Pluto could fail to see the empty office buildings, the closed factories, the forest of 'for sale' signs," he said in a typical live broadcast.

At the end of August, Weicker managed to convert three senate Democrats, later giving one of them a cushy state job, and at 3:06 a.m. on August 22, the senate voted 18-18 on the tax. Lieutenant Governor Eunice Groark cast the tie-breaking vote. Hours later, the House passed the tax by a vote of 75-73, with three Democrats and three Republicans crossing over to Weicker at the last minute. Several of these are now on his payroll.

Weicker's basic argument appealed to the upper-crust corporate mentality. The income tax, he told the state's business and industry lobbyists, would shift the burden away from business and onto individuals. Part of the package was a gradual reduction of the top corporate tax rate. Weicker's tax agents exerted another form of persuasion at the ground level. The gray areas in the state tax on manufacturing equipment allow a number of arbitrary decisions, and the tax collectors, some businessmen say, began to extort support for the income tax by making rulings that vastly extended the scope of the existing levies. Manufacturing equipment, for instance, now included newspaper printing presses.

Weicker found another upper-class constituency for the tax. The state already levied a stiff dividends-and-interest tax, defining returns on investments as "unearned income." Weicker's plan folded this tax into the new income tax, cutting the rate from 7 percent to 4.5 percent. One of the first studies of the tax found earlier this year that it fell proportionately less heavily on the highest brackets than on the middle class. The Fairfield County delegation provided stronger-than-expected backing. The Connecticut Business and Industry Association, the "establishment" business lobby, endorsed the tax and still supports it. Far from class treason, Weicker's policy drew significant support from wealthy businessmen.

And that was not lost on citizens; the opposition was populist and intense. An anti-tax rally at the state capitol that fall drew an angry, shouting throng of 40,000. Weicker went out in his shirt-sleeves to confront the protesters and had to be pulled from the jostling crowd by state troopers. (He made plenty of hay from the incident later, accusing the anti-taxers of hate-mongering.)

But a lot of the steam left the movement in 1992 when its organizer, former legislator Tom Scott, decided to run for Congress. (He lost.) In the same election, however, statewide voters made their most decisive statement on the issue in a referendum for a constitutional cap on state spending; it passed by more than four to one. A computer study by the *Waterbury Republican-American* concluded that if the cap had gone into effect a decade earlier, it would have eliminated the accumulated deficit that was used to justify the income tax.

A subsidy from Indians was one thing. But an identical arrangement with Las Vegas raised Weicker's moral hackles. Not only did he spurn Wynn, he broke up the gambling coalition by offering a tax break to the jai alai players and greyhound runners.

Why Business Was Wrong

Although Weicker and Cibes defend the income tax to this day, it's hard to see how their arguments could satisfy any economically literate observer of the past two decades. Even though political winds have shifted, and the wind-sock arbiters of public opinion would like to write off the Reagan years, "supply-side economics" now has the support of a substantial body of evidence, much of it from state governments that have cut or raised taxes.

As should be well known, in the middle of California's tax revolt in the late 1970s, Arthur Laffer ran a comparison of major states with high and low property taxes, and found a close relation with their economic performance. Less well known is that a young economist at Chicago's Harris Trust and Savings bank carried the research even further.

Robert Genetski decided to track relative performance of all fifty states. The key word in this exercise was "relative." First he measured the total burden of state and local levies (as a percent of total personal income) for each state. Then he charted the tax burden as a proportion of the national average. Then Genetski and his colleagues tracked each state's relative economic performance. For simplicity, they used the growth in each state's personal income, as a proportion of the national average. Genetski looked at the two numbers together, and—lo and behold,

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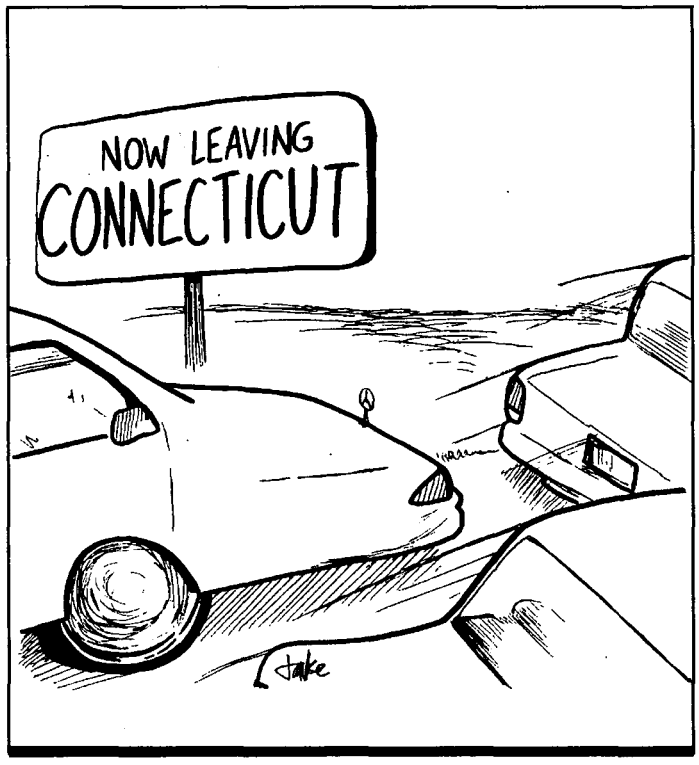
there was no relation. A state with a high tax burden might be doing well: a state with a low tax burden might be doing poorly.

But this was just the start of the story. In the crucial step, they began to test the impact of the *rate of change* of the tax burden. The theory here was basic. If a state suddenly increased its tax burden when everyone else held theirs steady, economic activity would roll across the border to more stable, lower-cost environments.

This result began to show up with a one-year-lag, but not dramatically. So Genetski and his colleagues decided to give the tax rises more time to take effect. They reasoned that people might wait a year or two before reacting to the tax trend. And this was the key. When they allowed a three-year lag between the tax change and the economic results, the match was dramatic. States with a shrinking tax burden showed the highest growth. States with rapidly rising burdens went into a tailspin.

More computer runs over the years, by Genetski, Laffer and others, have confirmed this effect, and even produced a prediction. Each percent increase in the relative tax burden, says Genetski, will produce a decrease in relative personal income of 0.3 to 0.6 percent. "I can't find one experience for any country throughout all history in which a net tax increase has resulted in anything but disappointing economic conditions," Genetski says. Nor, he adds, "when tax cuts have produced anything but economic growth."



The Predicted Disaster

Connecticut has become one of recent memory's more dramatic examples of a tax-induced disaster. In 1988, the state tax burden was about 7 percent below the national average. It started to rise then, with a surge from 1989 to 1990 that put it at parity with the 50-state index. By 1991, it was 7 percent above the national average. And all this happened before the state income tax began to kick in during the last half of 1991. The full impact of Weicker's tax bill is more than a billion dollars a year.

The economic drain shows up in a July release from the Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis, which compiles state personal-income figures. The Bureau measured state performance in the economic recovery by taking personal-income growth from the trough of the recession (the first quarter of 1991) to the first quarter for 1993. For this total of eight quarters, Connecticut finished dead last. Its personal income grew by 2.3 percent, just half of the national average. It was one of only four states that grew less than the inflation rate, meaning that Nutmeggers actually lost money over the period. (The number-one state, North Dakota, grew by 8.7 percent.)

These statistics are a pale reflection of the depressing reality that weighs daily on more than 3 million people. When Weicker argued that his income tax was needed to salvage the business climate, he pointed to the 86,000 jobs that had then been lost in the recession. Two years later, the job loss stands at 200,000. More than 100,000 jobs vanished *after* the income tax.

The job loss translates into an unemployment rate that was well below the national average as the recession took hold, but peaked earlier this year substantially higher than the national rate. (In May 1993, the state rate was 7.4 percent, compared to a national rate of 6.9 percent. But in recent months it has fluctuated below the national rate.)

Emigration from Connecticut was already fourth highest in the nation, BIT (Before the Income Tax). From March 1990 to March 1991, the state lost a net total of 47,000 people, 1.4 percent of its population. An academic group monitoring the state economy projects that an average of 25,000 a year over the next three years will be packing their U-Hauls, and this estimate may be low. The academics offer one consolation: if these people had stayed, the unemployment rate would have been even higher.

The Defense Defense

Weicker's defenders look at these numbers and say: It isn't our fault. Defense-dependent Connecticut has been hammered by cutbacks in high-tech military hardware, and in a real stroke of bad luck its civilian fallback, the commercial airline industry, is going through its own traumatic shakeup. In this view, the paradigm of the state economy is the ordeal of Pratt & Whitney.

Pratt is a division of the military industrial giant United Technologies Corporation, the state's biggest manufacturer. When outbreaks of peace put a damper on Air Force procurement, Pratt turned for jet-engine contracts to the airline industry. A host of auxiliary industries flourished in its train, building everything from the tools Pratt used in its

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plants to the guidance systems in the airliners' cockpits. As a double backup, Pratt kept going even when new jet engine sales dropped off because it also had a corner on refurbishing and maintaining the engines already in use.

But this time around, nothing worked. When military orders collapsed, the airlines were reeling from their own Cold War, following deregulation, fare wars, and the oil-price shock from Desert Storm. Carriers and leasing companies were cancelling aircraft orders as fast as they could break their contracts. Even the refurbishing business mysteriously disappeared, as the airlines cannibalized the engines on their vast fleets grounded in the Arizona desert.

As its earnings dropped like a stone, Pratt announced a "restructuring," an "expansion of the restructuring," and finally late this spring, a total of 9,000 layoffs and the closing of all its manufacturing in Connecticut. The job loss was only five percent of the recession's total, but the psychological impact on the state was devastating. (The pessimism was well founded, since the ripple effect of Pratt's closings could have destroyed a host of smaller machine shops and service companies in its supply chain and cost the state another 20,000 jobs. The final impact remains to be seen.)

"I can't find one experience for any country throughout all history in which a net tax increase has resulted in anything but disappointing economic conditions," Genetski says.

The Weicker administration brags that its response to the Pratt disaster was one of its finest hours, and indeed it may have been. Pratt said it was moving 2,300 of the threatened jobs to its plants in Maine and Georgia, where labor costs were $6-8 an hour lower. State economic officials labored with the company and the Machinists' union to reduce labor costs enough to keep some of Connecticut's production lines open. The state legislature passed a series of cuts in workers' compensation that had long been sought by the business lobby, and it zipped through a research-and-development tax credit structured so that United Technologies was one of a handful of companies that would derive the full benefit. In an emotional and embittered vote, the Machinists' union membership narrowly approved a package of pay cuts. One local analyst called it the most significant development in the state's aerospace industry since the founding of Pratt & Whitney itself.

But this purely defensive "victory" showed the circular logic of the Weicker administration. Government increased its tax bite on the community in the name of improving the business climate. But the higher taxes began to drive jobs from the state; workers who saw income taxes taking a bite from their pay stubs turned around and demanded higher wages to keep up their take-home pay, thus increasing labor costs. So the state used the revenues from the new tax to give the company inducements to make up for the increased labor costs. This is not only a vicious circle, but a spiral which at each turn gives government a greater role in the corporations it sets out to help. Such a corporate state has always had its appeal to the bureaucracies of both big business and big government, the two cultures that shaped Lowell Weicker. In one telling detail, the state aid package for Pratt included a grant for training workers in the Japanese management technique called Kairen, an extraordinary intrusion of government into the details of running the business.

The state's fixation on Pratt underscored its neglect of the real victims of its tax policy, the small entrepreneurial companies pioneering new technologies. Rhetoric from both Weicker and Clinton acknowledges that these garage companies become the Apples and Microsofts of the future. Weicker even brags about a number of state programs aimed at the "new-tech" infants. But this is the same corporatist spiral on another level: After making life miserable for all entrepreneurs, the state tries to repair the damage with a select few.

And it's during these periods of technological transition that tax increases can do the most damage. Businesses and industries seem to have a natural life span, and Connecticut has already gone through many generations of technology. Its water-powered factories gave way to coal-fired boilers. Its brass works and builders of steam locomotives faded out, but jet engines and computer software took their place. The much-bruited problem of "defense conversion" is a special case of the same phenomenon, with the difference that government-subsidized industries are making way for private enterprise.

The new technologies are there to take up the slack. Telecommunications equipment makers in nearly incomprehensible press releases describe modems that will vastly speed the flow of data from one computer to another; they are leaders in LANS and WANS, the local-area and wide-area networking that is making IBM mainframes obsolete. The alloy metallurgy of the state's Brass Valley, once the very model of a dying industry, is evolving into materials technology at the cutting edge of superconductivity. Local companies provide "attitude (cq) sensors" that keep satellites in stationary orbit, and they insulate chambers that chill off to a few degrees above absolute zero, at which molecular motion ceases. Laparoscopic surgery, using fiber-optic television images to guide instruments that work within the body, has given rise to a whole new medical supply industry around Danbury, with its own new technology of tool-making, ultrasonic welding. But the new-tech companies

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which could propel the state economy into the next century are gasping for air.

The new-tech entrepreneurs will give many reasons for the drag they encounter. There's the "credit crunch," the aversion to risk of a state banking system that has just gone through a Texas-style real estate and fraud debacle. There are the high business costs of a state with one of the nation's most expensive worker's compensation systems and a bankrupt unemployment insurance trust fund. There is the lingering hostility of large parts of the state bureaucracy. But there is also the state income tax, which falls heavily on the high-paid, highly skilled engineers the new companies need, not to mention on the entrepreneurs themselves.

The job impact shows up in the breakdown of employment provided monthly by the state Labor Department. As of the end of this spring, goods-producing industries had declined by 4.4 percent over the year, with a 14 percent drop in makers of "transportation equipment" (read: Pratt). Service producers are down by 1.1 percent, including a 2.5 percent drop in FIRE (finance, insurance and real estate). Significant growth comes only in health services, legal and professional, and state and local government. By some accounts, state government leads the pack, with a recent growth rate of 3.1 percent.

This is a pattern likely to intensify as the full impact of the income tax begins to be felt, which Genetski's computer runs indicate will happen in the third year after its full bite. Since the first full year of collections came in 1992, this bodes ill for at least two more long years.

Even worse, Connecticut stands as a reasonable microcosm for the national economy, as President Clinton's tax increase takes effect. By this standard, the country is in for years of stagnation, frustrated technological development, and growth in government employment. The one difference is that Washington won't have the Indians to bail it out. ❐

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Fairness Most Foul

by John Corry

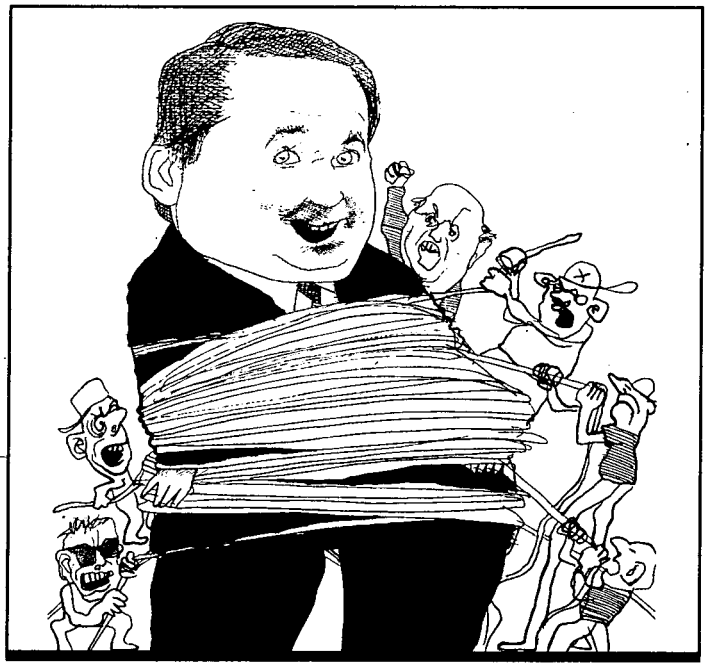
It may indeed be the "Hush Rush" bill, just as the *Wall Street Journal* said, or it may be only the reflex action of liberal politicians still frozen in time, but whatever it is, it has censorship written all over it. The Fairness Doctrine, not long ago pronounced dead and buried, has been disinterred. A bill to write it into law has sneaked through the Senate, and is making its way through the House. The thought police once again are up to no good, and the Rush in "Hush Rush" is Rush Limbaugh. The thought police may succeed. The press is not paying much attention—the *New York Times* neglected even to report the passage of the Senate bill—and the White House is supine. All concerned say they venerate free speech, but as always, they venerate some kinds of speech more than others. Limbaugh is an irritant in polite media circles and an annoyance to congressional liberals, and nobody really likes him except his millions of listeners. Under those circumstances, the Fairness Doctrine would be the way to do him in.

You must understand the doctrine's tortuous background in these matters. The Federal Communications Commission, created in 1934 when radio was the only electronic medium, said broadcasters could not deal in controversy or express their opinions. Station licenses were hard to come by then, and the broadcast spectrum was limited. The fear was that broadcasters might take ideological advantage of their monopoly positions.

Over the years, however, the FCC changed its mind, at least in part, and in 1949 it invented the Fairness Doctrine. At first it was unclear what the doctrine meant, but its requirements were eventually defined as follows: "(1) The broadcaster must devote a reasonable percentage of time to public issues; and (2) his coverage of these issues must be fair in the sense that it provides an opportunity . . . for contrasting points of view."

The devil was in number (2), and the First Amendment was turned on its head. Determining whether coverage is fair or balanced should not be left up to bureaucrats or politicians. Given the chance they will promote their own agenda. As a former assistant secretary of commerce in the Kennedy administration once candidly confessed, "Our massive strategy was to use the Fairness Doctrine to challenge and harass the right-wing broadcasters, and hope that the challenges would be so costly to them that they would be inhibited and decide it was too costly to continue."

Indeed, the Kennedy administration was successful at this, although it is no good now saying only Democrats could be so unscrupulous. The Nixon administration also abused the Fairness Doctrine; it surreptitiously pushed the FCC to penalize stations that broadcast left-wing critics. Meanwhile, various interest groups also found in the Fairness Doctrine a useful tool. They would complain that a radio or television station was being unfair to whatever the cause was they favored. If the station did not meet their demands, they would turn to the FCC. Then the station would face the possibility of being fined, or even losing its license. The hell with it, the stations decided, and avoided covering subjects that might make the interest groups complain. This was what broadcasters meant when they said the Fairness Doctrine had a "chilling effect."



Emancipation came in the 1980s. Mark Fowler, libertarian chairman of the FCC, said the commission would no longer enforce the Fairness Doctrine. Generally, it was liberals who opposed him, but some prominent conservatives objected, too. Phyllis Schlafly, for example, had used the doctrine in her successful battle against the Equal Rights Amendment, and wanted it retained; so did Reed Irvine. Fowler, howev-

John Corry is a former New York Times *media critic and the author of* My Times: Adventures in the News Trade, *forthcoming from Putnam in January.*

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er, held firm and was supported by a president who understood the First Amendment. When Congress voted to enshrine the Fairness Doctrine as law, Ronald Reagan vetoed the legislation.

Which brings us to the present. The *Wall Street Journal* editorial that suggested the move to revive the Fairness Doctrine was an attempt to silence Rush Limbaugh also put forth a reason. "Members of Congress," it noted, "just don't like the wide interest in public policy matters that talk radio generates." Indeed they don't. It embarrasses and annoys them, and they want to legislate it away. Limbaugh reaches some 20 million Americans each week and the Fairness Doctrine, artfully applied, might make him shut up.

Obviously, the liberal politicians will not admit this. When he responded to the charge that the Democrats were out to get Limbaugh, a spokesman for John Dingell, the most powerful supporter of the Fairness Doctrine in the House, was quoted in *Time*. "The world does not revolve around Limbaugh," the spokesman said, "although he's large enough." Ho, ho, ho, and two cheers for liberal wit, but it did fall short of a denial. The House bill disingenuously states that "because the Fairness Doctrine only requires more speech it has no chilling effect on broadcasters." This is simply not true, and in stating such a whopper, the congressmen give their whole game away.

Ever since the Fairness Doctrine expired, there has been more speech, not less. Limbaugh and a handful of others have rescued AM radio from near death, mostly by discussing conservative ideas not heard before over the airwaves. Stations no longer worry because Moms Against Nukes or, say, Friends of the Snail Darter are threatening legal action. Clearly the Fairness Doctrine had a chilling effect when it was in existence. If Dingell and his colleagues were serious and not merely mischievous, they would explain what dreadful thing has happened that now requires that it be reinstated.

The whimsical Sen. Ernest Hollings, who once forced Rupert Murdoch to surrender ownership of the *New York Post* in the name of free speech, has trotted out the ancient argument about "spectrum scarcity," but no serious person believes it. Even Mario Cuomo has noted that there are now some 10,000 radio stations, and more cable channels than there are programs for the channels to show. The real problem for Dingell, Hollings, and their like-minded colleagues, of course, is not that there is not enough speech; the problem is that they do not like the new speech they hear.

The mainstream media do not like it much, either. Most of the columnists and editorial writers who have criticized the attempt to revive the Fairness Doctrine have taken pains to disassociate themselves from Limbaugh and his pernicious conservative views. More significantly, though, they also disassociate themselves from his listeners.

Thus the *Washington Post* began an editorial with, "Rush Limbaugh probably wouldn't list us among his dittoheads," and the syndicated columnist Clarence Page began his attack on the Fairness Doctrine with the snide, "My friends, this is a ditto alert!" Then he went on to have great fun parodying Limbaugh. The dittoheads are Limbaugh's constant listeners, and when they speak to him on his call-in show, they often begin by saying, "Hi, Rush, and ditto." This saves a lot of time. Ditto means they agree with what Limbaugh says, and that they approve of the way he says it. Page's column suggested they were all untutored buffoons.

The viewpoint was instructive. Polls show a schism between the people and the press. Their beliefs are not the same. The dominant media culture leans one way, and most Americans lean the other, and they want someone who speaks for them. Consequently, Rush Limbaugh gets 20 million listeners, any number of whom just want to say, "Ditto." Indeed, if the effort to revive the Fairness Doctrine should be quietly buried, it will not be because congressional liberals have suddenly become enlightened, or suffered a seizure of good sense; it will be because they will realize they retain their jobs only at the pleasure of the voters, and that a great many of them are likely to be dittoheads. ❐

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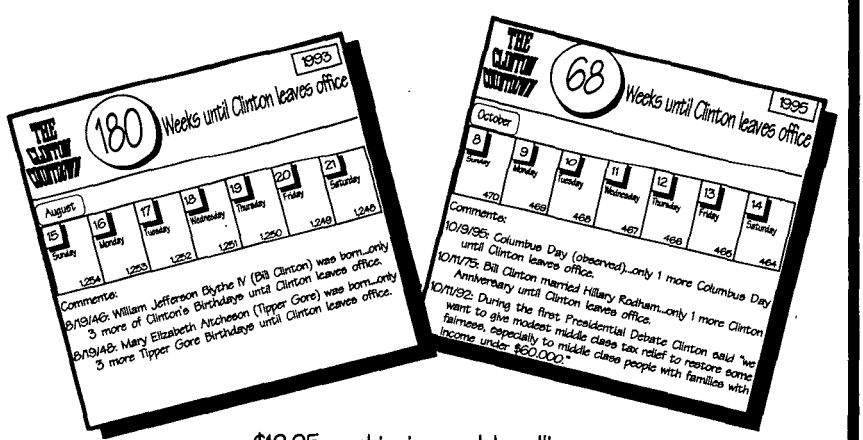

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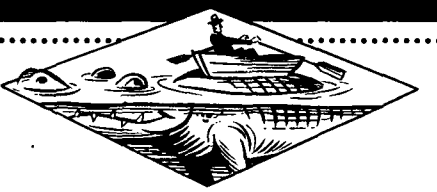

To Syria, With Love

by Saul Lewis

When Israel's prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, ran for office last summer, he campaigned on a platform that promised, among other things, not to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization, and not to negotiate with it. Now that Rabin has broken his pledge to the Israeli electorate, he is being lionized the world over as a great statesman. Why, exactly, did Rabin do it? Why did he agree to deal with a terrorist organization that all previous Israeli governments have sought to exclude from the so-called peace process—an organization, moreover, that without Soviet backing and Saudi money seemed well on its way to self-destruction? It seems crazy to Rabin's political opponents in the Likud party, and, frankly, it seems crazy to me. Yet I have to believe that Rabin is not crazy. So what is he trying to accomplish? To answer these questions, you can't rely on the American press, which doesn't even know what questions to ask. You've got to consult the Israeli press—which is what I did.

The first thing that struck me is how differently the two Israeli leaders responsible for the Israeli-PLO deal—Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres—described it. Listening to Peres, one might suppose that Israel stood on the verge of either the First or Second Coming, depending on which part of the Judeo-Christian tradition you subscribe to. "The agreement between Israel and the PLO," Peres declared, "is more than an agreement between leaders and institutions. It is an agreement between peoples. . . . A tremendous revolution has taken place inside the PLO. . . . We are not recognizing the PLO of yesterday, but the PLO of today. . . . We will bring about a new, modern Middle East."

By contrast, when Rabin discusses the Israel-PLO accord, he almost seems to damn it with faint praise. "I would not say that the entire package is a masterpiece," is the way Rabin typically characterizes it. "It contains great chances as well as risks." Nor does Rabin think that the PLO has undergone a "tremendous revolution." On the contrary, "It is still our enemy and remains so." But if the PLO reneges on its commitments, "we will always be able to turn back the wheel"—i.e., reoccupy the West Bank and Gaza.

These glaring differences between prime minister and foreign minister have led some Israelis to conclude that Peres forced Rabin into an agreement with the PLO. The highly regarded Israeli journalist, Ze'ev Schiff, contended that "Rabin was incrementally dragged into a process with the PLO through use of improper tactics [by Peres]." Another Israeli commentator wrote: "While Peres has assumed the most active role in the political field, the Prime Minister is giving the impression of a two-bit player."

That a dovish Peres dragged a skeptical Rabin into an agreement with Arafat is certainly a possibility. Peres has long been known in Israel as the "Arik Sharon of the Left," a single-minded politician who pursues his own agenda regardless of what his party leader or prime minister happens to think. Former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin once said of General Sharon, "He always tells me what he's doing either before or after he's done it," and much the same might be said of Peres. And just as Sharon more or less maneuvered Begin into a major war in Lebanon, so, quite possibly, did Peres more or less maneuver Rabin into an accord with the PLO.

Maybe that's all there is to it. Maybe an aging prime minister, eager to go down in history as a peacemaker and confronted by his foreign minister with a fait accompli, was afraid that if he didn't accept it, his coalition would break up, new elections would be held, and the Israeli public would not return him to office. Rather than face the prospect of electoral defeat and the end of his political career, maybe Rabin convinced himself that, as Benjamin Franklin said, "a bad peace is better than a good war," and a deal with the PLO, however distasteful, is better than no deal at all. In short, Rabin was an old man in a hurry (during the campaign, he had promised to reach a deal with Palestinians not affiliated with the PLO within six to nine months). Perhaps a combination of personal and political factors led him into a monumental foreign policy blunder.

I can't altogether rule this possibility out, but neither can I rule it in. Rabin, after all, is no lightweight. He would never allow Peres—a man he despises almost as much as Arafat—to lead him around by the nose. Prickly, hard-as-nails, and highly analytical, Rabin is not the kind of leader who goes along to get along. If he approved of the deal that Peres and Arafat cooked up, he must have had some compelling reasons of his own to do so. And these reasons, I suspect, have much more to do with Syria than the PLO.

The first thing to understand about Rabin is that he used to be chief of staff of Israel's armed forces, and he remains a military man to the core. Peres, like most members of

Saul Lewis is the pen name of a longtime Middle East observer.

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Israel's left-oriented "cultural elite," is obsessed with resolving the "Palestinian problem." Rabin, like most members of Israel's military establishment, believes that Syria, which is receiving missiles from North Korea and Russia capable of striking any part of Israel, and which is currently engaged in a massive arms buildup, is a far graver threat to Israel's security than the Palestinians. When Peres says "peace," he is thinking mainly of peace with the Palestinians. When Rabin says "peace," he's thinking of peace with Syria.

But how can Israel conclude a peace agreement with a Syrian regime that, defining itself as the champion of Arab nationalism in general, and Palestinian nationalism in particular, furiously denounced the late Egyptian leader, Anwar Sadat, when he signed a peace treaty with Israel? Perhaps Rabin calculated that progress on the Syrian front was impossible without an initial breakthrough on the Palestinian front. After coming into office, he discovered that reaching an agreement with non-PLO Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza was impossible. According to "an official close to Rabin," the prime minister concluded that the West Bank Palestinians "were not the type of leaders who could turn to Arafat and say 'Kiss my ass, we are the leadership.' They were first and foremost afraid of assassination and boycott by the inhabitants of the West Bank." Thus, when Peres presented him with the outlines of a deal with the PLO, Rabin (after tinkering around with it quite a bit) held his nose and embraced it, not because he thought it was an especially good deal, but because he hoped it would pave the way to what he really wants—a peace accord with Syria's President Assad.

That Rabin may have reasoned along these lines is suggested by some remarks he made on August 30, in a speech before a special session of his governing coalition. "From the strategic point of view," Rabin said, "Syria poses a greater problem than the problem with the Palestinians. However, a solution of the latter means solving the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although it is not the only one, it is the main focus of the conflict. Hence, what was agreed in Oslo, and will be presented and signed in Washington, is a great step forward in promoting Israel toward peace with all our neighboring countries." But of Israel's immediate neighbors, Israel already enjoys a formal peace with Egypt and a de facto peace with Jordan, which leaves only Syria as the main object of this entire exercise. (Lebanon, Syria's vassal state, doesn't count.)

Apart from a handful of people in Jerusalem, Damascus, and (maybe) Washington, nobody knows how far Syrian-Israeli negotiations have progressed. But there are a number of indications that some sort of deal is in the works. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has announced that if a Syrian-Israeli accord is reached, the U.S. would put its troops on the Golan Heights as a peacekeeping force. The Israeli press is full of stories about an imminent agreement, which government spokesmen deny, but which keep resurfacing anyway. Yasser Arafat visits Damascus with a draft of the Israel-PLO accord and is told, "It is up to the Palestinian people and their institutions to decide whatever they deem appropriate"—not exactly a ringing endorsement, but very different from Syria's hysterical reaction, fifteen years ago, to the Camp David Accords. Clearly, if the loss of his Soviet patron, the deteriorating state of his economy, and the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism finally push Assad in the direction of peace, Arafat has just provided him with a convenient pretext. Maybe that's what Rabin had in mind when he said, "The horizons for peace are open."

What would a Syrian-Israeli peace entail? It would probably look a lot like the current Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Syria would agree to recognize Israel, exchange ambassadors, and normalize relations; Israel would agree to withdraw from much, if not all, of a demilitarized Golan Heights; and the United States, in addition to stationing troops on the Golan to serve as a buffer between Syrian and Israeli forces, would provide Syria with all sorts of financial and technological goodies (assuming the parched Gaza Strip does not soak up whatever remains of American foreign aid), not to mention a gala White House reception for President Assad, which is our way of letting terrorists, mass murderers, and war criminals know they are forgiven.

If I'm reading Rabin accurately, then whatever happens in Gaza and Jericho as a result of the Israel-PLO accord is basically a sideshow. As a "senior security source" told the Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv*, "Syria was and remains the central axis in the peace talks." A breakthrough with Syria would tilt the "correlation of forces" sharply in Israel's favor—so much so, hopefully, that Israel would not be in much trouble even if the current Israeli-PLO agreement were to culminate in an aggressive and expansionist PLO state. (This is an outcome that Likud predicts is inevitable, Labor promises will never happen, and I think depends on what the U.S. position is five years from now, when the status of the West Bank and Gaza must be finalized.) But in the absence of a peace agreement with Syria, a PLO state, arising alongside a Syria that still belonged to the "rejectionist" camp, would only add to Israel's already grave security problems.

It would seem, then, that Rabin's assessment of what he and Peres have wrought might be correct. The agreement with the PLO is, indeed, far from a "masterpiece." But it may offer Israel a great chance—the opportunity to neutralize its most dangerous adversary, which, contrary to public opinion, is not the PLO, but Syria. At the same time, however, it threatens to empower Israel's most implacable foe—which is the PLO—and to introduce a new and dangerous factor, a Palestinian state, into the Arab-Israeli equation. (In the Likud's worst-case scenario, a PLO state on the West Bank first conquers Jordan, then teams up with Iraq and Iran to threaten Israel.)

How Rabin's great gamble will work out is anyone's guess. Had he asked for my opinion, I probably would have said, "Don't do this, Yitzhak! The Sphinx of Damascus is too inscrutable, the PLO is too slippery, the U.S. is too unreliable, and the margin for error is too small for you to gamble with your country's future." But my views were not sought out. More surprisingly, neither were Israel's military leaders brought into the secret negotiations until the very last moment. So now all we can do is sit around and wait for the other shoe—the Syrian one—to drop. ❐

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Miracle on 204th Street

by Edward Conlon

For weeks after Margarita Duarte saw the image of Jesus Christ on the bathroom window of Rosa Diez's fifth-floor apartment, on 204th Street and Post Avenue, in the Inwood section of Manhattan, the crowds gathered in the courtyard below. Over a hundred were there one recent evening at sundown, milling about, speaking in excited giggles and hushed whispers. Binoculars and telescopes were passed around; vendors sold tamales and flavored ices. The courtyard is surrounded by five five-story buildings, and many tenants looked out their windows at the crowd, staring back with the same bold scrutiny to which they were subject themselves. A few hung out laundry to dry and bedding to air, equally indifferent to public inspection and the prospect of the miraculous. Even though the window itself had been removed and boarded up, a second, though less distinct image of Christ had appeared, one apartment over, and the Virgin Mary was spotted in another window, one apartment below. Still another image could be discerned by some in a window on the opposite side of the courtyard.

Witnesses to the first image were able to attest to a likeness no more vivid than the better snapshots of Nessie in her loch, and the others were still less intelligible. Asked about the last image, one young man answered, "It's the white shadow of a woman," while a second said, "I don't know how to say it in English."

"How do you say it in Spanish?"

"Santa María."

"Saint Mary?"

"I guess."

Edward Conlon is a writer living in the Bronx.

Many of Rosa Diez's neighbors have devotional pictures and signs on their doors including one that read "YO ♥ A CRISTO" in bouncing, multicolored letters. Others have more practical accoutrements, such as the bus seat one tenant sports on the landing. The Diez apartment is spacious and spare, with a large, fluid population of relatives and friends. Mrs. Diez does not speak English, but her sisters, Finetta Delarosa and Yomarys Flores, and sister-in-law, Belkas Martinez, translated for her and supplied plentiful commentary and explanations.

"The priest heard about it and he came over. He said he wasn't seeing nothing. That the window was dirty."

"Excuse you? What about the other priest?"

"The last priest that came, he believed it. A nun came last night. She believed it, too."

"Rosa said maybe it be dirty or maybe it be something else. If that's it, why does she and the other neighbors think it was Jesus?"

"Hundreds came."

"Thousands."

"They said prayers in house. The priest washed it, with Clorox and soap, but it didn't come off."

"Three guys tried to take it off, but they couldn't. Then one girl tried, and she could. But they couldn't take it apart at the hardware store, they couldn't get the metal off, the outside part."

Such proofs of the supernatural fed quickly into the rumor pool and added to the legend of the window. Over the next few days, reinforcements from neighboring precincts were called in to police the crowd. The landlord demanded that the window be removed, and Rosa claimed that he threatened her with eviction unless she acquiesced. A compromise was brokered whereby the police would hold on to the window, and the landlord would return it to Rosa at some later date. A sergeant wrote an affidavit, on crumpled loose-leaf, attesting to the fact that the landlord promised to give it back. The statement concludes with a sentence that attempts a paralegal specificity but attains instead the grandeur of the prophets: "It is the window in which Jesus Christ appeared."

The Diez women were content with the vatic assurances of the policeman, and the multiplication of icons seemed to bear them out. When they were asked what the last big thing to hit the neighborhood was, the vehement chorus resumed:

"Crime."

"Murder."

"We used to call this place 'Vietnam.'"

"That man coming home from the party, in 105, in the late morning. I knew the guy. I saw him shot."

"Also there was the lady who jumped off the roof."

"And the guy who did, off the fourth floor."

"And the guy Morley, he was the last murder."

"And Emilio, in his aunt's apartment in 104."

"We think that was a robbery, a holdup."

"She don't know, 'cause she don't get into personal people's business."

"And the guy, who hanged himself up."

"He was mental sick, and threw himself from the roof."

"It's not an easy neighborhood to live in. Last summer, there were so many bullets. Lots of shots last summer."

Belkas Martinez showed me the bathroom from which the window had been removed. There were no towels or toiletries in the white linoleum room, and the

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chain from the light had been accidentally pulled off by one of the devout. Beneath the boarded window the congregation huddled in the courtyard, around the remains of a garden—patches of gravel and an ankle-high tree stump—confined behind a hurricane fence. Except for the sight of the faithful, there was little in the vicinity to admire, still less to worship.

Earlier this year, a few blocks to the north, the first rabid raccoon was captured in Manhattan since Wall Street was a wall. The plague to the south has been less well contained: a murder in Washington Heights occurs roughly once every three days, and the neighborhood has a fair claim to being the busiest retail drug outlet in the country. Small wonder, then, that the consolations sought in this climate of apocalypse are of an upper celestial order.

But even though the apparitions occurred in the parish of St. Jude, patron of lost causes, they have not been welcomed by church authorities. One rather harried parish priest was peremptory in his dismissal of the vision, hastily adding that he had "all respect for these good people." Across the river, the Bishop of Trenton put the kibosh on a man in Marlboro Township, New Jersey, whose backyard shrine attracted thousands each weekend in the hopes of a glimpse of the Blessed Mother. Other faiths, in other boroughs, have seen their prayers answered with similar ambiguity: Menachem Schneerson, nonagenarian leader of the Brooklyn-based Lubavitcher Hasidim, has not with any vigor discouraged his followers from the belief that he is the Messiah. He has suffered a series of cerebral accidents but not yet met with either death or visible divinity, and so the bets, technically, are still on.

So too, the Diez women, who have in the Latin fashion politely ignored curial impediments to their devotions, persevere in their hope that God has not forgotten 204th Street and Post Avenue.

"It's the best thing that could happen."

"Now there's a lot of people in other windows."

"The guys that hang out down there, they believe it. They say, O my God!"

"To me, I think it's a miracle that comes to this house. I want to see if this neighborhood changes, if this changes the neighborhood." ❐

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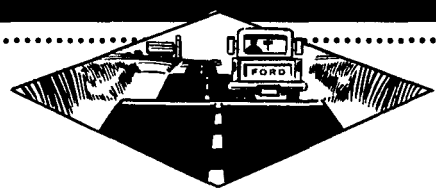

The Framing of Pat Nolan

by John Von Kannon

State Assemblyman Pat Nolan is not known to many people outside California, but his story is an important one. It is a story that shows just how hard bureaucrats—even gun-toting bureaucrats from the FBI—will work to justify their existence and past mistakes. And it's important because Pat Nolan is a principled and effective politician who could still have a future in front of him.

Nolan was first elected in 1978 as one of sixteen new Republicans in the 80-member Assembly, and soon distinguished himself as the principal architect of a Republican revival. By 1988 he had worked his way up to Republican leader, and was within five votes of unseating the powerful Democratic speaker Willie Brown. Some pegged him for a future governor or senator. What's more, he had broken Stan Evans's Law that "when Our People get in a position of power, they cease to be Our People." That Pat Nolan remained true to his conservative principles even as he advanced may have been the root of his downfall.

In August 1988, the FBI conducted a sting operation against Nolan's office and announced that he was under investigation. Last April, California's U.S. attorney filed charges against him for racketeering and money-laundering.

This is how the sting worked: The FBI set up a phony company, Peachstate Capital, which sought special legislation to reduce its bonding requirements so the company could start doing business and providing employment in a predominantly black neighborhood. The bill did not involve the use of taxpayer money. As a free-market conservative who first introduced enterprise zone legislation in 1981 and who has supported virtually every effort to reduce government regulation, Nolan voted for the bill. It passed 62 to 5 in the Assembly and unanimously in the Senate. Nolan had voted for a virtually identical bill that passed two years earlier but was vetoed by Governor George Deukmejian, who had been tipped off by the FBI that it was part of an undercover investigation.

After the vote, which took place on May 19, 1988, one of Nolan's legislative aides, Karen Watson, urged him to meet with people she thought were the owners of Peachstate Capital but who were, in fact, FBI agents. She told him they wanted to contribute to his effort to elect a Republican majority. After several requests, Nolan accompanied Watson to a meeting on June 29, where the undercover agents thanked him for his support and handed Watson an envelope, which turned out to contain two postdated checks for $5,000 each, marked "Payable to the order of _____." (The *Sacramento Bee*'s press accounts to the contrary notwithstanding, Nolan was *never* videotaped receiving the envelopes.) Since corporate contributions are legal in California, Nolan's staff deposited one of the checks in his campaign committee account and the other into the Republican Assembly campaign committee, *not* in his own personal checking account. By depositing those checks, his staff inadvertently set Nolan up for a money-laundering charge.

Nolan had voted for the bill twice, and his vote was consistent with his overall voting record and publicly stated views. He had had no contact with the phony company before these votes, and only after the *second* vote did he receive an unsolicited contribution—which by all appearances was perfectly legal. As Republican leader, Nolan was responsible for raising campaign funds. (The $10,000 from "Peachstate" represented .314 percent of the $3.2 million Nolan raised that year.)

Nonetheless, when the charges surfaced, Nolan stepped down as Republican Assembly leader. He has since been re-elected to the Assembly three times.

Pat Nolan is an old friend of mine. I was living in Sacramento in 1988, when the story first appeared, and the rumor around town—recently repeated by Dan Walters, the top political columnist for the *Sacramento Bee* (and no supporter of Nolan)—was that the FBI had originally set up its sting with the idea of catching Assembly Speaker Willie Brown. Brown is the influential and flamboyant lawyer/politician whose income from legal fees has soared since he was elected speaker. (His law office is conveniently located two floors below his Assembly district office in San Francisco.)

But when news of the FBI sting hit the press, Brown was not implicated. It was not lost on Sacramento pundits that the targets eventually chosen were people Brown and his allies wanted taken out: three conservative Democrats and two Republicans, including Pat Nolan.

Whether or not Willie Brown used the FBI to divert attention from himself, it is clear that the FBI had no case against Nolan. Not until April of this year did U.S. Attorney George O'Connell file charges. Four years and eight months after Nolan was targeted, days before O'Connell's term of office was up, and just four months before the statute of limitations would expire, O'Connell—reportedly hankering for a federal judgeship from the Clinton administration—decided to indict a Republican.

John Von Kannon, former publisher of The American Spectator, *is vice president and treasurer of the Heritage Foundation.*

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In the course of the investigation, FBI agents reportedly pulled the mortgage applications of "witnesses" deemed uncooperative, and compared the income reported to qualify for loans with actual income. Those who "puffed" their income to qualify for a loan would get another visit from the FBI, this time with a typed "302 field report," complete with false testimony. They would be told to sign or face perjury charges for lying on a loan application form. (The FBI claims it can search mortgage files because the application forms are submitted to the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, an agency of the federal government.)

One such witness I interviewed told me that when he had nothing negative to say about Nolan, the FBI agent exploded, saying, "I don't know why you want to protect Pat Nolan after what he has done!"

John Shahabian, former aide to a Democratic state senator, who had cooperated with the FBI on a related case, recently sent a letter to the FBI. According to the *Los Angeles Times,* Shahabian "accused the government of 'unethical police methods' and 'deceit' by allegedly distorting transcripts of secretly recorded conversations and covering up important evidence."

In the meantime, FBI agents worked over Karen Watson, a Nolan loyalist and the prime witness, who had arranged the meeting where Nolan was videotaped receiving the envelope that turned out to contain the two checks. On the day of the raid in August 1988, FBI agents seized Watson off the street, loaded her into a car, and took her to a building where they grilled her for seven hours. She was told she could have an attorney, but that if she left the room, they would raid Nolan's office. During the seven-hour marathon, she made contradictory statements. Over the next year, FBI agents confronted Watson with the contradictory transcript, warning her that unless she cooperated, she would go to jail for lying to a federal agent—a federal offense. The agents told her they would give her a lighter sentence if she would sign a charge implicating herself and Nolan. Which, eventually, she did.

Now, nearly five years later, Nolan is charged with soliciting and accepting campaign contributions in exchange for votes, and laundering money into campaign accounts. Practically no one in Sacramento outside the FBI believes Nolan is guilty, and even people within the U.S. attorney's office say there is no case. So what is the FBI's motivation?

There is, in part, a confusion as to the FBI's role in investigations with political overtones. Agent-in-charge Richard Ross told the *Los Angeles Times*: "We'll in a sense be lobbyists for the citizens of California." (Is lobbying the FBI's job? Is campaign finance reform?) Moreover, the questions directed at potential witnesses ("And what bill was this gift tied to?") show a certain naïveté about politics, and an unawareness that most people make political contributions because they believe in what the politician stands for. More important, they suggest a lack of real evidence of a crime.

A more charitable explanation is that the FBI was merely trying to weed out the corruption that does exist in the California legislature. In fact, two of those connected with the investigation have been convicted, and one other has pleaded guilty. All three were Democrats.

As Louis Freeh takes over the FBI, it is important that he establish priorities for investigations. Most Americans would be pleased if the FBI would focus on solving crimes that have actually occurred and apprehending people who have actually committed the crimes, rather than engaging in fanciful and expensive operations to create crimes that entrap innocent citizens—even if they are politicians. Valuable FBI resources should not be used on fishing expeditions. Attorney General Janet Reno must make sure that U.S. attorneys and Justice Department resources are not dissipated on investigations that have little basis, or that smack of political motivation.

And if the attempts of White House counsel William Kennedy to get the FBI involved in investigations of the White House travel office are any indication, that is not an idle worry. ❐

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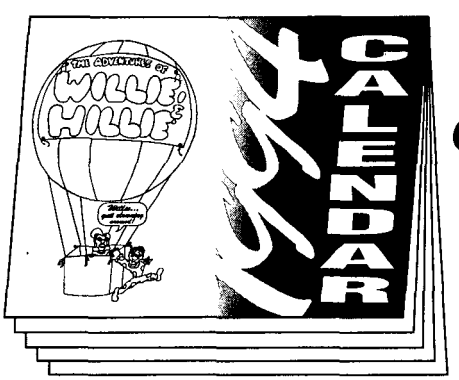

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My Private Idaho

by Benjamin J. Stein

Monday

Now, this is like old times, or the good old days, or something like that. Staci, one of my two original Valley Girls, now a grown-up 30, has come over to visit her old pal Ben as he searches in musty files for papers. I'm being audited for the millionth time, and I have to find out how much I paid for a stock literally six or seven years ago.

Staci, you may recall, was the Val who—when a junior at S.C.—had a choice of going for a semester to Madrid or to London. To my shock, she chose Madrid. When I asked why, she said, "Well, I've been studying Spanish for two years now, so I know it pretty well, and I don't have any idea what language they speak in London."

Since then, Staci has dated any number of famous men in this town, including some very muscular ones with Austrian accents (long before his marriage), some stars of big-time sitcoms, some major producers, and, well, you get the picture. Now she's visiting me and she went out to get the mail as the ocean breeze was wafting through my jacarandas and palms. I asked her to go through it, and she paused for a long time at a self-help book my friend Kim had sent me from Albuquerque.

Suddenly she gasped. "This is amazing," she said. "This is going to really, really make you happy."

"What's that?" I asked.

"You're quoted here right under a quote from Napoleon," she said.

I reached for the book. Sure enough, there was a quote from one of my own self-help books, *Bunkhouse Logic*, right under a quote from Napoleon *Hill*, the famous self-help author.

"Staci," I said, "this is Napoleon Hill. Not the world-famous one. A self-help guru, that's all."

"What's the difference?" she answered energetically. "They're both named Napoleon. And anyway, who even knows who Napoleon was? He was just a big name."

"I think people know," I said.

"Well, all right," Staci asked. "Just tell me. Who was Napoleon?"

"He was Emperor of France. He was one of the most accomplished strategists of all time. He fathered the Code Napoléon, which codified all the laws of France. He was an incredibly important person."

"But who even thinks about him anymore? Who even knows his last name? Do you, Mr. Braino, even know his last name?"

"Bonaparte," I said.

"Bone Apart?" she laughed. "What a name. I bet ninety-nine out of a hundred people today don't even know who Napoleon was."

The thing that's scary is that I really don't want to take that bet.

After Staci left, I had a call from N., a woman whom I met several months ago when I was still going to Journey Into Self-Obsession, my self-help group. I had hired her for one day of helping me file. I got so sick of her telling me about her compulsive interest in black men that I told her I didn't want to ever have her work for me again unless she could do so in total silence.

"Remember how you told me that if I could find a script for you in your files you would buy me a Cadillac?" she asked me.

"I vaguely remember it," I said. "I offer that to a lot of people. It's sort of a joke. Comes from an old song about buying a hillbilly singing star a Cadillac and putting him on 'American Bandstand.'" I knew it was a losing battle trying to explain to her what a joke was. Scratch a member of any, and I mean any, self-help group, and I will show you someone totally devoid of a sense of humor. (By the way, if you scratch a vegetarian, an organic farmer, a peace

Benjamin J. Stein is a writer, lawyer, economist, and actor living in Malibu, California.

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activist, a nutritionist, an exercise trainer, an interior decorator, or a jewelry designer, you're going to face the same problem.) "Well," N. said, "I didn't think it was a joke, and I thought you meant you would give me a Cadillac if I had sex with you."

"If you'll recall," I said, "I never even mentioned sex. You kept talking about sex and I kept asking you to be quiet and help me file."

"Well, anyway, it made me uncomfortable, and I was talking to a lawyer who told me that anything that has anything at all to do with sex that comes up at work that makes you uncomfortable is sexual harassment."

Oh, boy. I knew it had to happen. The feminist cadres were probably already writing big-character posters and preparing to demonstrate outside my house and denounce me to the Superior Court. I knew the day would come when any crank woman could simply make up anything and then threaten the power of the law to get whatever she wanted. The Cultural Revolution—it's here, comrades.

"I don't like talk of causes of action at law," I said.

"Well, it made me uncomfortable," she said.

"Tough. Your talking about how you needed to exercise a lot because you hadn't been having enough sex made me uncomfortable. But anyway, if you decide to sue, I'm going to counterclaim against you for your sexually harassing me. I'll stay at it until it gets to the Supreme Court. You know how us white men in suits are. We have all the money, and when push comes to shove, we always get our way."

This was a bluff, but N. bought it. "I wasn't threatening to sue," she said. "I just wanted to see if you had any more work for me."

"Oh, sure," I said. "As soon as I do, I'll let you know." I hung up as she was giving me her number, and I thought, oh, yeah. I'll give you some work. When they pull me apart with wild horses. When they put burning bamboo under my fingernails. Oh, sure. Count on it.

Still, it had been a close call.

Sunday

"You're going back to northern Idaho?" my friend from Connecticut said to me over the phone before I left on this trip. "Don't you know it's full of Nazis?"

"You're going to Idaho?" my relative in Brooklyn asked. "Don't you know about the Aryan Nations and how they murder people up there?"

"You're going to Idaho? Isn't that where the Skinheads are? Aren't you afraid they'll kill you when you walk down the street?" asked my neighbor here in Hollywood.

This is my fourth trip to northern Idaho in a year. I haven't seen any Nazis. Not one. No skinheads. No murderers. I haven't heard one racist remark. Haven't seen one racist gesture.

But here's some of what I have seen. Out the window of my modest hotel room at The Edgewater Inn, where I am staying with young Genghis Khan while Mommy is shopping in Hong Kong, is a long, sloping lawn. It leads to a white, sandy, curving beach. On one side of the curve there's a marina of sailboats gently bobbing in a light swell. There's a dock where someone rents aquacycles and two girls are pedaling them through the water. On the other side there's a swimming beach inside a "swim line" of logs. Behind it there's a green, grassy park. It's pretty early, so there's no one on the beach except one couple out for a walk.

There's an unobstructed, 20-mile view across Lake Pend'Oreille to the Cabinet Mountains on the west. The air is so clear that I can make out houses on my side of the lake that I know are four or five miles away.

That's what I see. On the streets of Sand Point, I see merchants who remember my name after I've bought two pairs of cotton trousers and remember Tommy's name, too. I see boys Tommy's age who can ride their bicycles into town without Mom and Dad having to stand guard with shotguns. At the Safeway, I see checkout clerks who remember that I like red delicious apples and that my son will, if given a chance, try to break their scanners.

In the local newspaper, the *Bonner County Bee*, I see a story about a middle-aged woman who, with her teenage daughter and retarded son, gave a lift to two girls on a nearby highway. The girls were from California. The family was from Bonner's Ferry, a small town north of here.

The girls said they were hungry, so the mother took them into her home for a few days and cared for them. One day the mother took them shopping with her son. While Mom was running into a store, the California girls stole the car, abandoning the boy a few blocks away, alone and bewildered. It was a small town, so the nearest merchant knew who the boy belonged to and returned him to the mother.

The police found the car, thoroughly trashed, and then found the girls, who were traveling with a crack dealer with a long arrest record. The mother, in northern Idaho, which you've now been thoroughly warned about, said, "We're Christians, and I guess we didn't spend enough time with these people to get our point of view across to them."

At the café of my hotel, the waitress for breakfast is a stunningly beautiful young woman named Nicole. She was a high school girls' basketball star. Then she married her high school sweetheart, and then he joined the Marines and she followed him from base to base, had two babies, and then came back to Sandpoint when his hitch was up. Now

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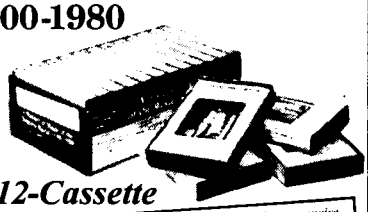

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she gets up at five in the morning to work the breakfast shift, picks up her kids from day care, occupies them, and keeps house. She and her husband are saving to own their own business someday. She always has crayons for Tommy and a smile and stays to talk about what's new in town. When I brought up the violence in Los Angeles, she said, "I hope that those people can get some peace in their hearts. That's the only thing that lasts."

In the Idaho I know, a new friend offered to get my son a rubber-band gun. He didn't mean to buy it at K-Mart. He took my son and me to his carpentry shop, drew a template outline, and then, out of a block of wood, cut out a pirate's pistol, attached a clothes pin, and then took Tommy out in the back yard and taught him how to shoot rubber bands.

In the Idaho I know, a tourist never hears a driver honking at another, never sees anyone giving anyone else the finger, never sees threats to life over a parking space. In the Idaho I visited, when a driver looks bewildered, locals stop and ask him if he needs directions.

The friends from Brooklyn and Connecticut and Hollywood who think they know a terrifying, TV-movie version of Nazi Amerika have never been to Idaho. The people who have been there know better, and I keep wondering how much of what people think they know falls into the same category—imaginary places, imaginary people, imaginary threats, the special, private, imaginary Idaho of the media.

Monday

Off to Kootenay Lake, Canada. It's about fifty miles north of the border, which is itself about fifty miles north of Sandpoint and about twenty-five miles north of Bonner's Ferry. Tommy; my pal Peter, who made Tommy's rubber-band gun; Peter's nine-year-old son Alex; and I all stopped at the border at Portknoll, and were questioned for about twenty seconds by a Canadian woman border guard.

"Did you bring in any firearms?"

"No."

"Whose kids are these?"

"Ours. The little blond angel is my son. The other boy belongs to my friend here."

"Do their moms know where they are?"

"Well, my son's Mom is shopping in Hong Kong, but I think she trusts me with him, and the same goes for my friend here."

"All right. Have a good time."

Canada is another country. No McDonald's, no Burger Kings, no car washes. But there is a huge lake, Kootenay Lake, whose fingers run almost to the border, massive forested mountains—the Selkirks, I believe—scary huge cliffs down to the Kootenay River, which feeds the lake, and an occasional picturesque *boîte* along the side of the road.

We continued our drive until we came to the tiny hamlet of Kootenay Lake. It was mostly a heading for the ferry that crosses over to Balfour on the other side of Kootenay Lake itself.

There was a small hotel, the La Chance. It had a tiny sandwich shop, selling tiny sandwiches and souvenirs. It also had a lovely blonde sandwich-making girl who said she recognized me right away from "The Wonder Years." For her trouble, I gave her the chance to sell Tommy many pieces of maple candy, and then we headed across the lake. Oh, by the way, the name of the lovely sandwich-maker girl was Fleur de Neige, which means "snow flower." I'm really not kidding.

We boarded the ferry. A driving rain came up while we were eating our sandwiches. The lake, about a hundred miles long and only about five miles wide—the direction we were going—was covered by low gray, black, and white clouds. We could see little houses by the water, tucked into the trees. There were even steeper mountains rising out of the lake, and an occasional osprey diving for fish then soaring to its nest by the shore.

The passengers were almost all Canadians, readily recognizable by their polite manners, their earth-toned clothing, and their distinct, slightly Scottish accents. The only American besides us was a young woman from Boisé who asked me for my autograph. *I love it when that happens.*

On the other side of the lake, at the ferry mooring, we could see down into something like a fjord. It was eerie, with light coming from the middle of the water, as if there were an alternate sun under the wavelets of the lake. Then, there was heavy rain on the mountain sides just a few miles away, and a slightly under-lit black-and-gray cloud cover over the water. The lake was *glowing*.

The trip back was even more beautiful, with that post-rain glow hanging over the lake and the river and the mountains. Just above Creston, we came to a turn in the road. There was another underlit mountain, a family of deer grazing, and the biggest, most vivid rainbow I have ever seen arching over the trees.

"Daddy, Daddy, let's pull off the road and try to find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow," Tommy screamed.

"No, Daddy's tired," I said.

"But a pot of gold," Tommy said.

"How big a pot?" I asked. "I'm already being audited."

We got to Bonner's Ferry at about eight and stopped into Maier's Fine Dining, which advertised its excellent chicken-fried steak. As we strolled in, we saw a capable-looking young woman in a waitress's uniform. Behind her, on the pine paneling behind the cash register, was a photo of the selfsame woman. It showed her wearing a sash that identified her as Miss Idaho Teen 1993.

She waited on us, and told us of her life. She's 16, and her name is Jan. Her father is a logger. She plays basketball and volleyball, and also works after school. She wants to be a lawyer, "and go to Harvard Law School," because she and her father love to argue with each other and with other people. Her unpretentiousness was fantastic. She routinely picked up Tommy's thrown french fries, brought him new vanilla milk shakes, as he spilled his, and nodded and then greeted by name every person who came in the door.

I told her she should go to Yale and not Harvard, and to Williams as an undergraduate, and I offered to help her, and then we drove back through the night to Sandpoint.

"Daddy," Tommy asked, "how fast can a twenty-speed bicycle go?"

"About thirty or forty miles per hour, I guess."

"Daddy, how fast can the fastest propeller plane go?"

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"About five hundred miles per hour," I answered.

"How fast does the Concorde go?"

"How fast does the Space Shuttle go?"

"How fast does a bullet go?"

We drove in the late-summer darkness down routes 95 and 2, along the Pack River, past an old sawmill, and past long trucks with rows of lights along and under them. Tommy never fell asleep and never stopped asking questions. Sometimes I want to just take him out of the car and kiss him until he turns blue.

Tuesday

Little Mister Perfect and I are out on Lake Pend'Oreille, in a jet boat. It's like a jet-ski, only it's a boat, and, man, it really goes. I'm in front, maneuvering it with a stick like an airplane control, and as I pull the red trigger of the thing, it shoots forward like a rocket, rocking and bucking, then finding its plane above the water and simply hurtling forward like a hydroplane.

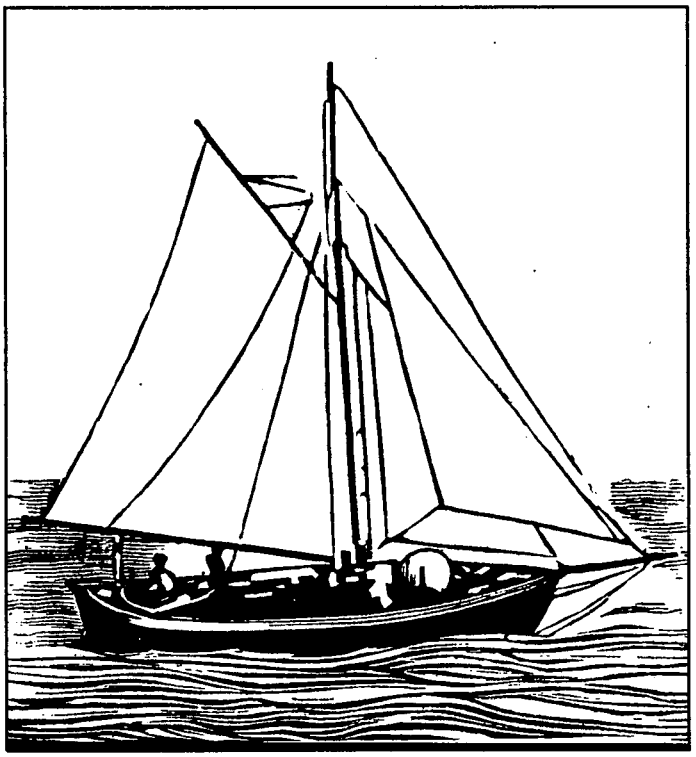
In the back seat, little Juan Fangio is shouting, "Faster, Daddy, faster."

The spray of the water is coming in and we're both getting wet. But the light is sparkling off the waves in millions of little diamonds, and the sun is behind a thin cloud over the Cabinet Mountains, and there's a large sailboat in the distance towards Hope. I keep looking back to see if Tommy's there, and he keeps shouting "Faster, Daddy, faster."

We went under the Long Bridge into town, and then past the home of a friend, whom we could see on his lawn by the lake, and then by a home I'm thinking of buying, and then back across the lake to the swimming area. It's a perfect day, with a hint of fall, fleecy clouds, a vivid green, and my angel near me. "Daddy," he said as he leaned forward to me, "do you see how everything is a color?"

My estranged wife and I went through hell to get this boy. Fertility clinics, crooked lawyers, actually criminal lawyers who forged our names on papers, another lawyer who wanted $5,000 to make sure our baby was "all white," as he said (and this lawyer was in Beverly Hills), and we walked out of his office, and I still am ashamed I didn't report him to the bar (as if they would have done anything).

Then, a great lawyer, and a lovely, smart Mom who chose life. You don't have to tell me what choosing life means. It means the sweetest moment imaginable among a father, an angel son, and a perfect day. "Life, what a wonderful choice," the ads on TV say. Amen and amen and amen. This perfect boy. This perfect day, and I the inheritor of it all out on a jet boat on Lake Pend'Oreille.



Thursday

Here we are, Tommy and Daddy, heading back through Seattle to glorious Los Angeles. On the way, in my little coach seat on Horizon Airlines (another truly great airline, which gives you adorable delicious little basket dinners of turkey and grapes), I am catching up on my *Wall Street Journals*.

I love this item about how Bill and Hillary have finished their thinking about health care with an incredible idea: they're going to put ceilings on how much they'll allow people to spend on medical care.

Now why didn't anyone else think of that? If there's excessive spending by hundreds of millions of Americans, as determined by Bill and Hillary, then Bill and Hillary will just order the spending to stop at a certain point and not go on.

I like it. We should be grateful. Now, if some elderly guy needs a gallbladder operation and there's no money left for that kind of surgery, tough luck, bubby. You're dead. Or, maybe it'll work another way. Maybe Bill and Hillary will set a ceiling, and by some magic process, all of the billions of medical transactions that year will come out to be exactly what Bill and Hillary said they should be.

Bill and Hillary shall now have the power that only Caesar once had: in peacetime, they can decide who shall live and who shall die. *Ave Caesar, nos morituri te salutamus.* It's bigger and better than price control—it's life-and-death control.

And, of course, there won't be better health care. There will just be less health care.

Remember a few months ago I told you what people from my vintage (and Bill and Hillary's) were like at Yale Law School? Remember? Well, I think I forgot to add that they don't know much economics. My old pal, and a very smart guy, John Coyne, says that we tend to make policy mistakes and think we knew they were mistakes, and then, wham, a few years later they're institutionalized as standard policy.

Let's see:

1. No-win war in Vietnam.

2. Subsidies to the laziest, most violent people in society to produce more children.

3. Penalties on working, middle-class people when they produce children.

And now, life-death/wage-price controls in medicine. I like it more every time I think about it.

Boy, am I glad that Hillary and her pals never met Tommy's mother. ❐

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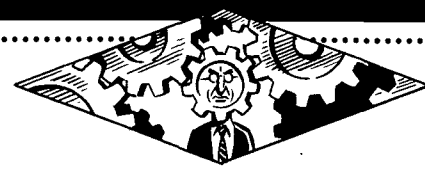

Choice: A Burkean Dissent

by Charlotte Allen

"Our theory is that school districts are merely creations of the state," the lawyer said. "They're artificial. They're arbitrary boundaries drawn on a map that tell children where they have to go to school."

He was describing a pair of lawsuits his office has on file that ask courts to order sweeping changes in the way that two of the country's most populous states organize their school systems. Part of the relief the suits seek is the virtual abolition of local, community-based school districts—the only way, according to the suits, to protect inner-city students' constitutional right to a "quality" education. Another busing activist on the rampage, right?

Uh-uh. Dirk Roggeveen is senior litigation attorney at the Institute for Justice, the group that spearheaded the anti–Lani Guinier campaign. And the institute's lawsuits are marshaling the legal strategies of liberal activists—pulverization of local control, rule by judicial fiat, and an expansive interpretation of constitutional rights—all in the name of a cause that most conservatives cherish these days: school choice.

Shouldn't Roggeveen's rhetoric of radical egalitarianism make conservatives think twice about choice-in-education? And how about the lawsuits themselves, which ask courts to force public-school districts—i.e., taxpayers—in Chicago and Los Angeles to underwrite vouchers to subsidize private schools?

Certainly, many public schools are terrible, especially in the inner cities. Certainly, the public schools are top-heavy with bureaucracy and sclerotic with wasteful spending. Certainly, the teachers' unions have a chokehold over the system, so that high pay, dopey pedagogical fads, and job protection take precedence over competence and creativity. School choice—if Bill Clinton *and* the National Education Association oppose it, isn't it a good idea?

A choice initiative is on the November ballot in California. Brent Schundler, the new Republican mayor of Jersey City won election on a voucher platform. And there is pressure in Michigan to set up a statewide voucher sytem now that the state has repealed school funding via the property tax. Nonetheless, if voucher systems should become a reality, conservatives will have to bid farewell to many notions they hold dear. First and foremost is the Burkean "little platoon" of local loyalties, for most voucher plans include provisions that deliberately shift governance of school districts away from those who live in them and toward state or federal authorities. Furthermore, even staunch advocates of choice concede that an inevitable consequence will be increased government regulation of private schools, not to mention the creation of another client for the welfare state: the private-school system. Finally, voucher systems are likely to cost taxpayers even more money in the long run than the current system, as governments find themselves supporting private schools on top of public schools they won't be able to get rid of.

Choice plans aim to weaken local school districts because they are typically much more than a way to help parents pay private-school tuition. The California initiative, for example, would allow children to attend not just the private school of their choice but the *public* school of their choice, even if it lies outside their home district. Currently, most school districts restrict enrollments to the children of the people who live inside the district and pay the taxes that support their local school system. This has always irritated liberals, who for decades have pressed the courts (usually unsuccessfully) to break down district lines by forcing wealthy suburban districts to accept children from poor urban districts. The California initiative, championed by conservatives, would accomplish what years of litigation by liberal activists could not, mandating that schools with excess enrollment capacity must open their doors to anyone who wants to attend, "regardless of residence."

This provision has even the initiative's backers a little nervous. In a letter to the Heritage Foundation, David Barulich, director of research for the Los Angeles–based organization that drafted the ballot measure, Excellence through Choice in Education League (ExCEL), conceded that the initiative's "inclusion of inter-district public school choice" was its "main deficiency." Wrote Barulich: "This provision could cost us dearly in the suburbs." So ExCEL is trying to soft-pedal the inter-district language, pointing out that suburban schools wouldn't have to accept inner-city children unless there were vacant seats in suburban classrooms. "A district could always declare that its enrollments were filled up," says Barulich. Sure, until the NAACP finds out and sues.

Liberal activists (and, apparently, some conservative activists) chalk up suburban school districts' jealous guarding of their boundary lines to racism. But upper-middle-class suburbs—and small towns and even a few minority-heavy pockets of large cities, such as East Harlem's famous District 4—have actually managed to create public-school systems that work pretty well, given all the legal and union constraints that burden public schools. Relatively small and highly responsive to the concerns of interested parents, these school systems serve the function that public schools were originally set up to serve: educating the children of a specifically defined local community and passing along its values. The California initiative (and, presumably, a successful outcome in the Institute for Justice's lawsuits against California and Illinois) would obliterate successful suburban and small-town school districts.

And even voucher plans that do not contain inter-district enrollment provisions often require states to equalize spending among school districts—fulfill-

Charlotte Allen is a Washington writer.

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ing a longtime liberal-activist goal of preventing communities from taxing themselves extra dollars to provide extra amenities for their classrooms.

Conservatives also ought to worry about increased government regulation of private schools that accept students on government vouchers. The Supreme Court has made it abundantly clear—in rulings upholding prohibitions on abortion counseling at federally funded family-planning clinics and compliance with affirmative-action paperwork rules at colleges whose students accept federal tuition grants—that he who takes the king's shilling must dance to the king's tune.

There appears to be no natural limit on the level and kinds of restrictions that legislators and regulators can place upon private schools that participate in choice plans. The nation's first full-fledged voucher plan, Wisconsin legislator Polly Williams's 1990 program for poor children in Milwaukee, forbade religious schools from participating. No sooner did the state legislature enact the program than State Superintendent of Public Instruction Herbert Grover issued a laundry list of statutory and constitutional rights that participating schools must afford their students, including "all federal and state guarantees protecting the rights and liberties of individuals including freedom of religion, expression, association, unreasonable search and seizure, equal protection, and due process." Just try to expel a kid or censor the student newspaper at a voucher school in Milwaukee. A court upheld virtually all of Grover's rights rules—rules that would drastically alter the nature of most private schools, which pride themselves on holding students to higher standards of behavior and performance than is constitutionally allowed these days at public schools. Not surprisingly, only seven out of eighteen nonsectarian private schools in Milwaukee have chosen to participate in the Williams program.

Similarly, a failed choice proposal on the ballot last year in Florida would have barred single-sex schools from the voucher program and prevented participating religious schools from preferring students of their own religion. Even school-choice advocates express fears that regulators could cripple private schools with the same bureaucratic requirements that have ruined many a public school, and gradually drain away private schools' independence. Pointless teacher-certification rules, controversial sex-education and "multiculturalism" courses, required curricula and textbooks, hillocks of paperwork—none of this is unthinkable.

The California initiative's drafters seem alert to these threats to private schools' autonomy and distinctiveness. The ballot measure forbids discrimination only on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, and national origin, leaving single-sex and religious schools alone. (Home schooling, incidentally, would *not* be subsidized under the California initiative.) Another California provision freezes existing regulation of participating schools unless a legislative supermajority votes otherwise. Even these protections may not prove impenetrable, fears Frank R. Kemmerer, a law professor at the University of North Texas who has written extensively about the possible "publicization" of private schools that accept public money.

"If it turns out there are significant abuses, the public will demand that there be some sort of legislative response that will apply to all schools, even the good ones," says Kemmerer, a former private-school headmaster. "It was that way with day care. There were abuses, there was a public outcry, and now you have a lot of regulations."

Even if the legislators and the regulators hold back, the courts (egged on by the ever-litigious ACLU) may step in to rule that accepting voucher money turns a private school into an arm of the state, meaning that voucher students deserve all the constitutional protections—against expulsion, flunking out, feeling bad about themselves, and so forth—that public-school students now enjoy.

School-choice advocates like to talk about how much education money vouchers will save states.

Actually it is more likely to cost states money, as taxpayers find themselves obliged to pay for a private-school system on top of a public-school system that is likely to prove not so easy to dismantle. Jersey City's Schundler plans to ask the state legislature to foot the bill for his own choice plan in that financially strapped city. A choice initiative in Colorado failed last year largely because it would have cost taxpayers $85 million during its first year. One reason that private schools cost less to operate than public schools is that their teachers are often willing to trade off lower salaries for autonomy and better-motivated students. Once private schools begin resembling public schools—and the free money starts flowing in—teachers may agitate and perhaps even unionize for their share of the government boodle.

At the very least, the radical talk of school-choice advocates should give conservatives pause. Here is Joe Nathan, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*: "The best choice plans are accompanied by effort to equalize funding among districts; help educators create new programs so that there are choices, not just choice; help parents make thoughtful decisions; prohibit school admissions tests; and provide transportation." *Prohibit school admissions tests*?

How about this favorite argument of voucher enthusiasts: Rich people get to send their children to private school, so why shouldn't poor people? Huh?

Rich people get to live in mansions, too. Does that mean the government, which provides housing for the poor, has to give welfare recipients fancy estates in Beverly Hills? I thought it was liberals, not conservatives, who argued that when the government guarantees people a right, it has an obligation to subsidize the exercise of that right.

School-choice proponents do have one persuasive weapon in their arsenal: that a system that hands out vouchers to parents instead of dollars to school districts could loosen the clutch on public education that bureaucracies, ed school faddists, and teachers' unions have held for decades. "The public-school system is so bad that we have to do something to get rid of it," says David Boaz, vice president of the libertarian Cato Institute.

Boaz's assessment is by and large correct. But what he and other choice advocates ignore is the law of unintended consequences—consequences that can be avoided by focusing more narrowly on specific problems. If the problem is unions, then hire permanent substitutes the next time teachers strike. If it is curriculum, then mobilize public opposition (the state of Virginia recently dropped its spacy "outcomes" requirements for graduation after parents raised a hue and cry).

Surrendering local control of yet another historically local institution—and turning hitherto-independent private schools into outposts of the public system—may or may not cause a corrupt education establishment to implode. But it will certainly leave us even more in thrall to a powerful central government. ❐

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Florio Fights Back

by Grover G. Norquist

Four years ago, New Jersey Governor Jim Florio raised state taxes by a record-breaking $2.8 billion. Despite a campaign promise to oppose higher taxes on the middle class, Florio even hiked taxes on toilet paper. The state exploded in rage, taxpayers led massive rallies in the state capital, public opinion polls showed Florio a deeply unpopular governor, and the conventional wisdom was that anyone could defeat this unmasked and unrepentant tax-and-spend liberal.

Today the race is an even bet between Jim Florio and his Republican challenger Christine Todd Whitman. What happened?

First, in reaction to the Florio tax hikes, the Republican state legislature was given a two-thirds majority in both houses in the off-year election of 1991. The Republicans had veto-proof majorities but failed to deliver on their promise to pass term limits on New Jersey's congressional delegation and to pass an amendment to give New Jersey's voters what twenty-four other states have: the right to initiative and referendum. They also refused to challenge Florio on most of his tax hikes.

Jim Florio capitalized on the Republican abdication by seizing term limits and the initiative as *his own* issues. And Florio now stands to the right of Whitman on welfare reform. Florio supported an initiative led by Wayne Bryant, a black Democrat in the state legislature, that would reduce welfare payments for additional children born after a woman is already on welfare. In September, Florio proposed another welfare reform—a requirement that a mother identify the father before a child would be eligible for welfare, enabling the state to go after the father for child support before taxpayers are sent the bill.

Christine Todd Whitman reminded New Jersey voters how her personal wealth has isolated her from their values when she responded to Florio's proposal by saying:

> The Governor is playing to the most vicious stereotype of a welfare recipient in the most demeaning and degrading way possible. What is the Governor's next idea in his headlong rush to embrace extreme right-wing radicalism? A program of tattoos for welfare mothers? A badge sewn onto their clothing identifying them as welfare recipients? Creation of colonies like leper colonies, where welfare recipients would be forced to live?

Bill Clinton is watching the Florio/Whitman race carefully. After winning the presidency with a New Democrat message, Clinton threw it all away with his five-year budget plan, when he decided to fully fund the present welfare state rather than reform it. His first high-profile fight with Congress on economics was over his insistence that taxpayers pour $16.5 billion more into corrupt big-city machines. He then ran a five-month campaign calling for higher taxes. After ducking the label in 1992, Clinton spent the first half year of his administration re-establishing himself as a tax-and-spend liberal. Fine for reassuring his electoral base. Not helpful to Democratic candidates in 1994 or himself in 1996.

A Yankelovich poll released in September showed Clinton's disapproval rating at 45 percent. And Clinton's drift left has hurt his bid to bring one-seventh of the economy under federal control. Only 15 percent of Americans have a great deal of confidence in his ability to reform health care. Thirty-two percent have no confidence. Fifty-six percent of Americans believe Clinton's proposal will increase their personal health costs; 16 percent believe their costs will decrease. Only 19 percent of Americans believe Clinton will improve the quality of health care; 35 percent think his proposal will reduce it.

Understanding his vulnerability on health care, Clinton has chosen two other issues to guide his long trek back to the political mainstream: "reinventing government" and "ending welfare as we know it." Both resonate with taxpayers. It remains to be seen whether Bill Clinton can make himself or his party a credible advocate for either, and whether Republicans will counter his efforts or instead follow the errors of the Whitman campaign that may throw away a once-certain governorship this November.

Clinton opened his drive to the center with the release of Vice President Gore's "National Performance Review." The proposal claims to save taxpayers $108 billion over the next five years and Clinton and Gore got a wonderful David Gergen–orchestrated photo-op on the White House lawn in front of forklifts weighted down with federal paperwork. Gore's handlers are hoping that breaking ashtrays on "Letterman" will make voters forget that Senator Gore scored *zero* on the 1992 Citizens Against Government Waste rating on opposition to pork-barrel spending, and that the National Taxpayers Union rated Gore the biggest spender in the Senate (edging out West Virginia's Robert Byrd) in 1990.

Gore's proposed reforms are paltry, and almost 10 percent of their "savings" are taxes in the guise of user fees. The $108 billion in purported savings would affect only 1.3 percent of total federal spending over the next five years. By

Grover G. Norquist is president of Americans for Tax Reform.

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contrast, the recommendations of the Reagan-appointed Grace Commission, led by businessmen, not federal bureaucrats, would have saved $424 billion over three years, or 14 percent. The 65 percent of the Grace proposals that were implemented saved, according to the Office of Management and Budget, $152.4 billion from 1986 to 1989. (While stealing some of its ideas, Gore has been particularly insulting to the Grace effort. He nonetheless told Ross Perot—falsely—that Grace had endorsed the Gore review.)

If Clinton doesn't deliver the $108 billion in cuts, he strengthens his reputation for mendacity. And by admitting that the federal government is rife with waste, he steps onto territory where Republicans can outbid him. When Sen. Phil Gramm demanded that Clinton's promise to cut total federal employment by 250,000 be written into law, Clinton balked. Sen. Connie Mack (R-Fla.) has proposed a spending-cut commission based on the Military Base Closing Commission, the brainchild of Republican Conference Chairman Dick Armey. Mack's commission would identify $65 billion in spending cuts (no tax hikes) and Congress would have to vote up or down on the entire package. House Republicans are urging that an Armey-style commission be established in each federal department.

But it is becoming increasingly clear that Clinton is not interested in real downsizing. As Republican leaders are pointing out, all you really need to know about the Gore report is that the leaders of the three largest labor unions representing federal bureaucrats have enthusiastically endorsed it.

Clinton is having more success on the welfare issue. The nation knows that welfare is broke, and Clinton speaks to this national understanding. Since 1965, federal, state, and local governments have spent $5 trillion (in 1992 dollars) in the war on poverty—more than it spent to defeat Hitler and Tojo in the more successful Second World War. Today, government spending on welfare flows through eighty different programs and totals $306 billion a year.

Candidate Clinton said he would cut off welfare after two years and require that welfare recipients work. This idea is wildly popular with all sections of the voting populace. The problem is that Clinton doesn't believe in it: The 1993 Clinton budget has $110 billion in expanded funding for existing welfare spending and no reform. *Not one dollar* was put in to implement workfare.

But by responding to Clinton's rhetoric, rather than the reality of his welfare policy, national Republicans now threaten to pull a Christie Whitman. Some Republicans in the House, led by Florida's Clay Shaw, are presenting a Clinton-Lite alternative that claims to "require work," but doesn't. Robert Rector, the Heritage Foundation's welfare expert, points out that if Shaw's bill passes, the headlines will read, "Clinton and Republicans agree on welfare reform, require work."

Shaw is giving Clinton the issue, repeating the mistakes Republicans made in negotiating the Family Support Act of 1988. That act authorized billions in additional welfare payments while supposedly "requiring" welfare recipients to work. Republicans, the presumed critics of welfare, gave pro-welfare Democrats cover—in exchange for nothing. Today, five years after this bipartisan demand for work for welfare, fewer than 1 percent of AFDC parents are performing community service in exchange for their benefits. And fewer than 7 percent nationally are engaged in "training, job search or work."

Republicans may be saved by Kansas Republican Jan Meyers, whose rival legislation stakes out three reforms that Clinton's Democratic coalition would have to oppose:

- Freezing AFDC spending at 1993 levels and returning the program to the states in a block grant.
- Providing that there will be no AFDC payments unless both the mother and father are at least 18 years of age (thus eliminating the incentive of an apartment of one's own).
- Providing that there will be no AFDC benefits unless paternity is established.

Christine Todd Whitman and New Jersey's Republican state legislature have allowed Jim Florio to do the impossible—reposition himself to the right of her hapless campaign. Clay Shaw is unwittingly helping Bill Clinton do the same thing. James Carville is now publicly stating that a Florio win would show Clinton a useful four-year strategy: Hike taxes early. Spend the money to buy political allies. And in the home stretch move to the center on a few key issues, such as welfare reform.

Jan Meyers would cut Clinton off at the pass. Her approach draws a line in the sand—putting Republicans on one side and Bill and Hillary Clinton and Donna Shalala on the other. If true welfare reform is defined in the public mind by Meyers and not Shaw, then Clinton will face the 1994 and 1996 elections as its proven enemy. ❐

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Postscript: On September 21, Christine Todd Whitman unveiled a strong pro-growth economic package that would cut New Jersey state spending by five percent and then limit growth to inflation, and cut the income tax by 30 percent while eliminating a number of smaller taxes. Developed by leading supply-siders like Lawrence Kudlow and Malcolm Forbes, Jr., the plan could put Whitman back to the right of Florio—at least on the critical tax issue.

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Mainstream Radical

by Terry Eastland

At the end of Judge Ruth Ginsburg's confirmation hearings, Sen. Orrin Hatch undertook to explain why he admired five of the opinions Ginsburg had written during her thirteen years on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. In two of them Ginsburg refused to create a cause of action for liberal litigants (civil rights groups in one case, homeless persons and disabled rights groups in the other) who were trying to sue the government for alleged nonenforcement of civil rights and other laws; for Ginsburg, it was up to Congress, not the courts, to authorize such litigation. In another case, Ginsburg joined Reagan appointees Robert Bork and Antonin Scalia in declining to agree with a gay sailor's constitutional challenge to the military's ban on homosexuals; for Ginsburg (as for Bork and Scalia), the D.C. Circuit was bound by a Supreme Court ruling in conflict with the sailor's argument that the right of privacy should be extended to protect homosexuality. In all five of these cases (of the remaining two, one involved immigration, the other labor), Hatch found that Ginsburg had demonstrated a willingness to follow the law, "even though you might personally have preferred different results as a matter of policy." In Hatch's view, the important thing was that she had refused opportunities "to legislate from the bench."

For Hatch, the ability of a judge to separate his personal views from the task of interpreting the law is "an essential qualification" for the Supreme Court. He's right, and in these cases and some others, Ruth Bader Ginsburg certainly had demonstrated this virtue. That made it easier for her to attract the support of conservatives like Hatch, who found her an infinitely better choice than someone like Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. The judge won high praise for her intellect, experience, and integrity, and her low-key manner made her easy to like. In the end, only three senators (Republicans Jesse Helms, Don Nickles, and Robert Smith) voted against her—so quietly as to escape notice.

What should not escape notice, however, is the real significance of Ginsburg's appointment. For notwithstanding her demonstrations of judicial restraint, she has taken her seat on the court as the most jurisprudentially radical appointee in living memory. Note that I do not say she is the most radical *justice*—time will tell on that—only that she is the most radical jurist at the time of her appointment to the court, if the positions she has taken in her legal career are any indication. That she does not seem radical—even to conservatives like Hatch—is a measure of how far the legal and political culture has shifted to the left.

The most important fact in Ginsburg's pre-appointment record is her unequivocal affirmation that there is a right to abortion that the Constitution must protect. Ginsburg is the first justice ever to have taken this position prior to appointment. It was, of course, in the 1973 case of *Roe* v. *Wade* that the court, by a vote of 7-2, declared abortion a constitutional right, but until Ginsburg not a single nominee to the court had embraced its controversial conclusion—not even Ford appointee John Paul Stevens, a consistent pro-abortion rights vote since his confirmation in 1975. In those days, the viability of *Roe* had not yet jelled as an issue, and Stevens wasn't asked to declare his views.

But by the late 1970s the pro-life movement was a force to be reckoned with, and it was able to influence the politics of judicial selection after Ronald Reagan's election. Reagan, and then George Bush, sought justices (and judges) who were *Roe* agnostics, i.e., jurists who—whatever their personal or policy views—did not believe the Constitution could plausibly be read to include a right to abortion. Although Reagan appointees Sandra Day O'Connor and Anthony Kennedy and Bush appointee David Souter declared last year that abortion is a constitutional right, none of them had ever said as much before their elevation to the high court, whether in a speech, law review article, judicial opinion, or Senate testimony.

Ginsburg has altered the pattern. Although as a judge she criticized *Roe* in speeches, causing some liberal angst, she made clear during her confirmation hearings that her difficulties with *Roe* were merely prudential, not doctrinal. Ginsburg not only gave unequivocal support to the privacy rationale em-

Terry Eastland is editor of Forbes Media Critic *and a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.*

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braced in *Roe*, but also reiterated her view that the right to abortion is protected by the Constitution's equal-protection guarantees. This, too, is a first. Nor had any previous nominee taken issue with the court's abortion-funding decisions. In speeches and articles, Ginsburg had criticized on equal protection grounds the rulings that upheld bans on the use of public funds to pay for poor women's abortions—a position she was barely quizzed on during her confirmation hearings.

Ginsburg also has arrived at the court as the first appointee ever to maintain, in equal protection cases, that gender classifications should be subject to the same level of scrutiny as racial ones. Any policies that treated the sexes differently could thus be ruled unconstitutional unless they were justified by reference to a "compelling governmental interest." Ginsburg argued that position as an advocate in the 1970s, even while recognizing that, as she once put it, "the framers of the 14th Amendment did not contemplate sex equality." This fact, she said, was "the formidable historical impediment to judicial declaration of the legal equality of men and women." That fact, too, had also helped motivate her in the 1970s to support the Equal Rights Amendment, which she said in her confirmation hearings was still needed, if only for symbolic reasons. No previous appointee had said the ERA should be added to the Constitution.

Ginsburg's radicalism caused hardly a ripple inside the Senate. The reasons are apparent. Bill Clinton promised a Supreme Court justice who believed the Constitution includes a right to abortion. The Democratic Senate was determined in the wake of the last confirmation—Clarence Thomas's—to insist that the next nominee affirm a pro–abortion rights position. And meanwhile there had been last year's *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey*, in which O'Connor, Kennedy, and Souter not only declined to overrule *Roe* and its privacy rationale but also affirmed in no uncertain terms its "central holding."

The political and legal landscape thus having changed, Ginsburg's position on abortion, while radical compared to that taken by previous appointees, now seemed unexceptionable. No senator queried Ginsburg on her characterization of *Roe* as a case "affirming the right of the individual to be free"—as though that were the only moral aspect of the debate. While Ginsburg was asked during the hearings to empathize with people on the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder, at no point was she asked to be sensitive to the views of those who believe—as the criminal law used to teach—that abortion is homicide.

As for her views of the equal protection clause and the ERA, these would have been controversial, as one senator observed, only if Ginsburg had been a late-1970s nominee. Even though the court has not formally adopted the "strict scrutiny" standard in reviewing sex discrimination claims, it has come close. Meanwhile, support for the ERA, which failed of ratification more than a decade ago, was not going to light any fires of opposition in a Senate intimidated by accusations of insensitivity to women.

Ginsburg's radicalism was obscured in press accounts that described her as a judicial moderate. While there can be no question that Ginsburg's tenure on the Court of Appeals moderated her work as a judge—she has said so herself—there should also be no doubt about where her jurisprudence is anchored. Ginsburg is committed to the egalitarian doctrines that have crept into modern constitutional law. She believes in judicial restraint only as a means of achieving equality.

While Ginsburg can be expected in nonconstitutional cases to be a judicial moderate, even at times a conservative, in constitutional cases raising equality issues she probably will cast votes that extend and consolidate the court's egalitarian agenda. Only if she thinks such a vote might undermine the goal of equality by causing division in the nation will she decline to cast it, in which case she would await the case in which she could do so with fewer ill effects. Ginsburg could cast the vote that overrules the court's abortion-funding cases, or the vote that declares homosexuality a protected constitutional right, thus overruling *Bowers* v. *Hardwick*, the 1986 decision in which the court, by a 5-4 vote, declined to invalidate a Georgia statute criminalizing homosexual sodomy. (The justice she replaced, Byron White, dissented in *Roe* and wrote the court's opinion in *Hardwick*.) And she is likely to push for the court's adoption of the strict-scrutiny standard in sex-discrimination cases. As a Supreme Court justice, it bears noting, Ginsburg will no longer be bound by the decisions of any higher court.

Conservatives will rue the day they began telling liberals that if they want to influence appointments to the court, they should first win back the presidency. What's more, that advice was incomplete, for the most important variable in the confirmation equation is same-party control of the presidency *and* the Senate. Bear in mind that Democratic control of the Senate from 1986 through 1992 prevented the appointment of more committed exponents of originalism and judicial restraint, thus halting the Republican effort to put the court back under the Constitution. If Republicans recapture the presidency in 1996 but the Senate remains in Democratic hands, the latter will demand of high court nominees that they swear to *Roe* and much of the other jurisprudence that Ginsburg has been the first appointee to affirm. The politics of judicial selection have been, to coin an appropriately awkward term, Ginsburged. It will take a mighty electoral shift to turn the tide. ❐

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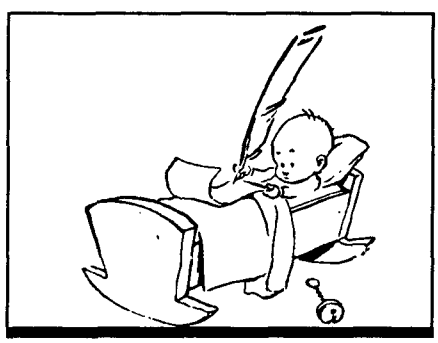
The Fall of the Family

by James Bowman

Two films out this month begin with discussions between fathers and sons about loyalty. In *Striking Distance*, a policeman (Bruce Willis) laments the fact that the entire department thinks him a rat because he turned in his partner, who is also his cousin, for police brutality. His father, another policeman, reassures him by quoting the family motto: "Loyalty above all else except honor." In *A Bronx Tale*, a boy who witnesses a murder committed by a neighbor refuses to identify the culprit to the police, then says to his father (Robert DeNiro): "I didn't rat. I did a good thing, right?" The father reassures him by saying: "Yeah. You did a good thing for a bad man."

Which of these two fathers is right? If you take the view of honor promulgated by the so-called "honor codes" on certain college campuses, then the first father is. Honor *means* ratting when someone has broken the rules of the community. Certainly the film stacks the deck in favor of this answer, for the guy Bruce ratted on turns out to be, like so many policemen in their spare time, a psychopathic killer. Good thing he ratted on him, huh? But if you take the more traditional view of honor—as articulated by, say, General Douglas MacArthur, whose guiding principle in a famous West Point hazing case was "never lie, never tattle"—the second father is right. There can be no disjunction between honor and loyalty.

I bring the matter up because so many of the autumn spate of movies take as their theme divided loyalties and the family. In one (*The Good Son*), a mother finds herself cantilevered over a cliff edge with a son—who has tried to kill her—hanging to one arm and a nephew—who has tried to save her—hanging to the other. Whom does she let drop? This is like the cop who is a serial killer in *Striking Distance*: a deliberately far-fetched (not to say preposterous) situation designed to undermine our natural sense of loyalty and family. In fact, what that sense most often comes into conflict with is our equally natural urge to pursue our own, individual happiness. But where that is the case, Hollywood rarely has any doubt as to



which impulse to side with, so film-makers are driven to dream up more exotic conflicts such as that in *The Good Son*.

Through this tangle of new and familiar dilemmas, a guide of the sort that William Safire used to provide to world politics might be useful: a guide to *Whom to Root for*. Herewith, then, my alphabetical tour of the multiplexes in search of true family values. Films in which they are to be found are awarded the coveted Bowman Bullet (thus: •):

The Age of Innocence by Martin Scorsese. *Root for*: Newland Archer (Daniel Day-Lewis) and the Countess Olenska (Michelle Pfeiffer), for putting family loyalty, for once, ahead of personal happiness. Unfortunately, Scorsese only pities them, which is not the same thing at all. The very title suggests a backward look—from an even greater distance than Edith Wharton's original backward look—at primitives too naïve to share our modern, sophisticated understanding of the importance of personal fulfillment. Their old-fashioned ideas are re-created in the same spirit as the lavish costumes and sets (and meals!) of the 1870s—that is, as museum pieces. Because the lovers' dilemma is not really a live issue either to Scorsese or to most of his audience, this is basically a designer movie.

The Ballad of Little Jo by Maggie Greenwald. *Root for*: Medical science. A sex-change operation is obviously the only thing for Josephine Monaghan (Suzy Amis), who for thirty years or so passes for a man in the Old West. It's true that unmarried girls who got pregnant in the nineteenth century were sometimes thrown out into the streets and that life in a western mining camp would have been extremely hazardous, at the least, for an unprotected young woman. But what I wonder is why she decided to leave the East, where there were places and situations, however arduous or insalubrious, to which she could have retreated in safety, and go instead to a bubbling cauldron of testosterone like a mining camp. Come on, Maggie: What's her motivation? I think there must have been something funny about this gal from the start.

Betty by Claude Chabrol. *Root for*: Laure, the widow played by Stéphane Audran. She takes Betty (Marie Trintignant) under her wing when the latter's husband, having caught her with a saxophone player on the living room sofa, throws her out. I love Chabrol, but he has a fatal weakness for psychologizing. Having delved into her childhood and found the trauma at the root of her sexual promiscuity, he thinks he can make us root for Betty. Then he cuts the ground from under us by making her

James Bowman, The American Spectator*'s film critic, is American editor of the* Times Literary Supplement.

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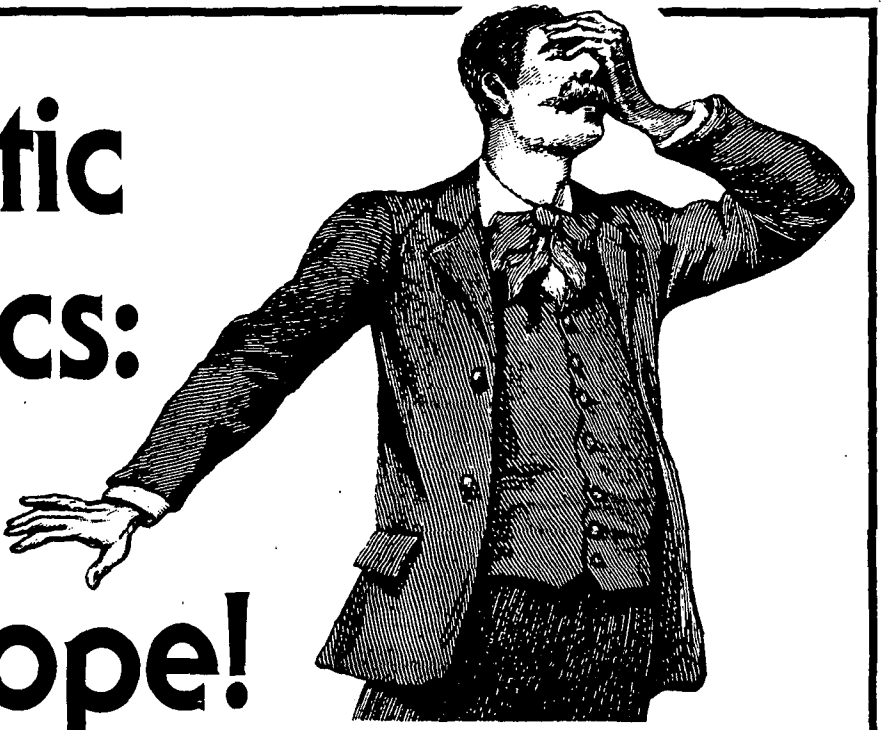
Authentic Catholics: Don't Lose Hope!



After Vatican II the number of converts to Catholicism slowed to a trickle. But now that the papacy has regained its bearings and confidence, the Church has attracted a new wave of converts, including highly literate people like Malcolm Muggeridge, Richard John Neuhaus, and Lewis Lehrman.

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betray her benefactress too. Doesn't work. We don't forget as easily as he does what the creature is capable of.

Bopha! by Morgan Freeman. *Root for*: Micah, the South African policeman played by Danny Glover. Freeman pushes a good story too far when he tries to enlist our sympathies on behalf of Micah's son, Zweli (Maynard Eziashi), simply because he demonstrates against apartheid. Call me old-fashioned, but I don't believe that any but a bad political cause would require a son to humiliate his father in public and put his life and career at risk. The final scene in which Zweli shouts slogans about his so-called brothers and sisters being killed by the evil system while his real father is being killed by his so-called brothers and sisters is hair-raising in its monstrousness, but the dynamics of Freeman's direction work against the irony and in favor of the slogans.

Boxing Helena by Jennifer Chambers Lynch. *Root for*: Miss Lynch (daughter of David) to get married, settle down, give birth to quintuplets, and never, ever make another movie.

• ***A Bronx Tale*** by Robert DeNiro (director) and Chazz Palminteri (writer). *Root for*: Sonny, the gangster, played by Mr. Palminteri. So what if he killed a guy? It was war—or as good as. To his own people, and especially to DeNiro's young son who didn't rat on him, he is wise, generous, and compassionate, a natural leader whom the boy would be a fool not to look up to. The authors are understandably ambivalent about him and balance him with DeNiro's character, a decent but rather stiff bus driver given to spouting solemn platitudes about the superiority of "the working man" to guys like Sonny. But we don't believe it any more than the boy does; any more than the bus driver himself does. Paradoxically, the unmarried, unchilded Sonny more than anyone else in the film stands for the loyalties that sustain families and communities. DeNiro's coming to pay his respects to him in the final scene suggests that the authors recognize this.

The Good Son by Joseph Ruben (director) and Ian McEwan (writer). *Root for*: Whatever spaceship Ruben and McEwan are traveling on to go the way of the Mars probe. They have set their drama on some other planet that looks exactly like this one but where there is no presumption of the existence of family loyalty, where it is plausible to depict a 10-year-old boy (Macaulay Culkin) from a loving home willfully murdering or attempting to murder his siblings and parents. To us earthlings this is just absurd.

• ***Into the West*** by Mike Newell. *Root for*: The two Irish gypsy boys played by Ciaran Fitzgerald and Ruaidhri Conroy and their magic horse (as if it were possible to root for anyone else). Here the boys' defiance of their father (Gabriel Byrne) extracts him from the soulless isolation and drunkenness into which he has sunk after his wife's death. "The old ways is dead," he tells his father-in-law, but, by bringing him back to the ties of family and community that he has forsaken, his sons unwittingly show him that they are not. An utterly charming family film about families.

The Joy Luck Club by Wayne Wang. *Root for*: The Stepford husbands. Those blockheaded, smiling young men at the family dinners need to speak up instead of standing around beaming at their newly empowered wives. To Wang and Amy Tan, the author of the book and co-author of the screenplay, men who are not bastards are not interesting, whereas the women are all paragons of suffering virtue with nothing more to reproach themselves with than lack of self-esteem. This is a chick flick to leave *Sleepless in Seattle* in the dust and to give even *Fried Green Tomatoes* a run for its money. It is not as bad as *FGT*, but its emphasis on personal happiness over family, tradition, and the old Chinese ways makes it deeply subversive of family values. Besides, I don't believe that these women could have gone through all they did in China only to resurface in California mouthing a pidjin version of California therapy-speak. Maybe women in old country not know own worth, but they knew a lot more important things.

• ***Money for Nothing*** by Ramon Menendez. *Root for*: Joey Coyle (John Cusack). Oh, all right, root for his brother and his mother, who know that he's found $1.2 million in the street and ask him to give it back but who don't turn him in when he doesn't. The family should come first in such a case, and the mother and brother are the admirable family members. But you've got to love Joey Coyle, as Menendez does. The guy is too stupid to realize that he can't get away with keeping the money, and of course he does everything wrong in the attempt to keep it. But his foolhardiness in taking his best (and probably only) shot at worldly riches for himself and his family makes him a hero of a sort.

The Remains of the Day by Ismail Merchant and James Ivory. *Root for*: Stevens, the buttoned-up butler played by Anthony Hopkins, to remain a bachelor and a butler. This is another designer movie (see *The Age of Innocence* above) that patronizes the past—and, incidentally, badly oversimplifies its politics. We should defy the determined attempts of Merchant and Ivory to make Stevens's loyalty to his employer seem merely quaint, if not tragic, and to wring our hearts over the poor man's inability to show his feelings for Emma Thompson. Thus do we strike a blow against designer movies and promote the worthy cause of getting and keeping good servants.

Striking Distance by Rowdy Herrington. *Root for*: The corpses. Their sense of loyalty and family is unimpeachable and they do the best acting in the film.

• ***The Wedding Banquet*** by Ang Lee. *Root for*: The parents, played by Sihung Lung and Ah-Leh Gua. This is another film that explores the subject of family loyalties by creating a clash between modern, secular American culture and a traditional culture, only this time the traditional culture and its values are shown some respect. The parents of a Chinese-American yuppie, Wai Tung (Winston Chao), arrive in New York from Taiwan to attend his wedding. In fact, he is gay. Unwilling to tell them so, he arranges to fob them off with a marriage of convenience to a Chinese acquaintance (the beautiful May Chin) who is in need of a green card. Although the parents soon divine their son's secret, they allow him to proceed with the charade. After a hilarious series of misadventures at the traditional wedding banquet, Wai Tung actually impregnates his new wife. Out of hearing of his son, the old father comments: "If I didn't let them lie to me, I would never have gotten my grandchild." And so too, if we didn't have this peculiar system of lies and loyalties that is the family, humanity would become extinct. That is a very hard fact to face for devout believers in the yuppie ethos of personal autonomy, but it is heartening to know that from time to time, even in Hollywood, it *is* faced. ❐

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NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST: A BIOGRAPHY

Jack Hurst

Alfred A. Knopf / 464 pages / $30

reviewed by ROBERT D. NOVAK

When the train carrying Tennessee's delegation to the 1868 Democratic National Convention in New York stopped at a small Northern town (its name long forgotten), a gang of toughs gathered outside. Its leader, a supposedly undefeated brawler, challenged one of the delegates to emerge from his coach so that he could "thrash" him. The delegate's name was Nathan Bedford Forrest.

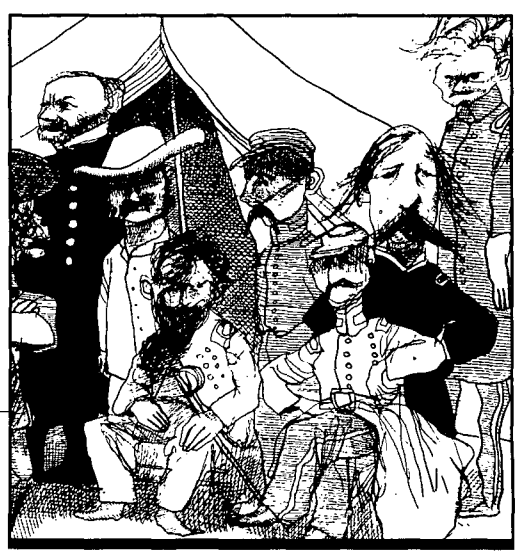
The local champion burst into the car in which the fabled Confederate cavalryman was riding, shouting, "Where's that damned butcher Forrest? I want him." Forrest, "erect and dilated, his face the color of heated bronze, his eyes flaming, blazing," arose—a giant for his time at 6 feet 1 1/2 inches and 180 pounds—and confronted his antagonist. "I am Forrest," he said. "What do you want?" When the town bully stopped cold, turned, and ran terrified from the coach, with a now roused Forrest in pursuit, he was doing only what thousands of frightened Federal soldiers had done before him.

Forrest's propensity for violence and an ability to instill fear help explain one of the most extraordinary, and most overlooked, figures in American history. A quintessential son of the South, Forrest was arguably the Civil War's most successful troop commander, and without question its most innovative tactician.

Yet the latest biography of Forrest, by *Chicago Tribune* country music columnist Jack Hurst, is one of very few. Forrest is but faintly remembered in the South and unknown elsewhere (a situation only slightly remedied by the PBS Civil War television series). He is most widely cited for a probably apocryphal military axiom—"get thar fustest with the mustest"—which is even more improbably rendered by Hurst as "I always make it a rule to get there first with the most men." In recent years, he has been the focus of efforts to remove Forrest statues in the South, a posthumous acknowledgment of his role as a founder and the first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Wizard of the Saddle is succinctly described by Hurst as:

> an epic figure who, having risen from log cabin privation to wealth as an antebellum slave trader, became the only soldier South or North to join the military as a private and rise to the rank of lieutenant general. He was also the intrepid combatant who killed 30 Union soldiers hand to hand, had 29 horses shot from beneath him, and was so feared by even his most warlike opponents that one of them, William T. Sherman himself, pronounced him a "devil" who should be "hunted down and killed if it costs 10,000 lives and bankrupts the treasury."



Sherman later called him "the most remarkable man" produced by the war, an assessment shared by Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, who said Forrest would have been the conflict's "great central figure" had he been educated.

Not just that Forrest lacked formal military training. Six months' schooling in his lifetime left him semi-literate at best. His use of English as a written language is illustrated by his rejection of a soldier's third request for a furlough: "I told you twist [meaning "twict," lower-class Southern for twice] Goddammit Know [meaning "no"]."

For the next century, the world's sophisticated general staff schools would study this unlettered backwoodsman's use of cavalry as mounted infantry, his tactics of deception, and his concept of the constant offensive even when outnumbered. Forrest was indeed a military genius, but he was also something more: a genuine man of violence. The thirty Federal officers and men he killed in close combat were not the only victims dead at his hands. Forrest during the war killed a Confederate lieutenant with a pen knife and after the war a black hired hand with an ax, both in self-defense. He was not to be trifled with, even by superior officers. In 1863, quarreling with his theater commander, the dyspeptic Gen. Braxton Bragg, Forrest wrote him: "You have played the part of a damned scoundrel and are a coward, and if you were any part of a man, I would slap your jaws and force you to resent it." Bragg did not dare risk the consequences of reporting this insubordination and meekly agreed to Forrest's transfer out of his command.

Forrest was the epitome of what W.J. Cash in *The Mind of the South* (1941) called "the tendency to violence which had grown up in the Southern backwoods." This tendency, Cash wrote, "reached its ultimate incarnation in the Confederate soldier," who went into bat-

Robert D. Novak is a syndicated columnist, a television commentator, and editor of the Evans and Novak Political Report.

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tle with the conviction "that nothing living could cross him and get away with it." This was the quality that enabled the Confederacy to prolong for four years its rebellion against overwhelming odds—with Forrest the last Southern commander still leading troops in the field in the spring of 1865. Minnesota farm boys sent to Mississippi to fight Forrest were confronting a ferocity given voice by the blood-curdling rebel yell and summed up by his slogan: "War means fightin', and fightin' means killin'."

Riding ahead of his outnumbered troops, he used fear on foe and friend alike. "Forrest's troops feared him more than the enemy, and with good reason," Hurst writes. "Assaulting or shooting them with his own hands when they tried to run from battles, he compelled them to run in the opposite direction." Forrest often deceived the enemy into thinking his forces were much larger and then did his best to frighten them out of their wits. At the battle of Brice's Crossroads in 1864, where he led one of the most humiliating routs in the history of the U.S. Army, Forrest voiced his philosophy of war: "Get 'em skeered, and then keep the skeer on 'em."

The sense of dread evoked in combat by "the sudden and terrible Forrest" (to use Cash's phrase) does not emerge as vividly from Hurst's printed page as it did from Shelby Foote's epochal three-volume history of the Civil War. Hurst is less adept at the difficult art of combat narrative, stingy with maps, and sometimes overwhelmed by his file cards, compelled to offer all conflicting accounts of even trivial events. Nonetheless, Hurst does an admirable job of charting "an exceptional American's remarkable philosophical journey." Needless to say, he regards Forrest as a man of far more subtlety than the contemporary Northern press's portrait of a racist butcher commanding his troops to slaughter black soldiers trying to surrender at Fort Pillow.

Like his region, slave-trader Forrest prospered from slavery (his annual earnings in the late 1850s surpassed $100,000, a seven-figure income today), was ruined by the war, and never recouped. His leadership of the Ku Klux Klan was clearly an effort to subvert black political aspirations.

Starting in 1868, however, Forrest began to condemn Klan violence and in 1873 was quoted as saying that if he "were entrusted with proper authority, he would capture and exterminate the white marauders who disgrace their race by the cowardly murder of Negroes." Hurst concludes that Forrest "embraced the Klan as a weapon in a savage fight for individual and sectional survival—and thrust it away soon after he saw that it injured, instead of aided, the best interests of the South and the Nation."

But Hurst also sees a less pragmatic softening in outlook toward blacks, as Forrest neared his death in 1877 at age 56 and for the first time became a practicing Christian. Addressing a black gathering in 1875, he declared: "We have but one flag, one country, let us stand together. We may differ in color, but not in sentiment." It would be a century before white Southern politicians would echo those sentiments.

Forrest's story so parallels the drama and tragedy of the South that this ambivalence on race brings into question the validity of Cash's analysis of Southern violence as dedicated to the "savage ideal" of black inferiority. Violent Forrest and the South were, as their Yankee foes could testify, but the connection to race was never that simple. In undercutting the prevailing one-dimensional picture of the slave trader–Klan leader, Hurst has written the most complete and objective treatment of Forrest to date, and has ploughed some important new ground. ❐

THE IMMOBILE EMPIRE

Alain Peyrefitte

Alfred A. Knopf / 630 pages / $30

reviewed by WILLIAM McGURN

Among certain sinophiles it has always been popular to date Britain's unhappy relations with China to Lord Macartney's refusal, 200 years ago this past September, to perform the ritual kowtow in that first fateful diplomatic encounter with the emperor. But for this unforgivable breach of etiquette, the argument goes, China might have ultimately been induced to look with favor upon British petitions. It was a view shared by Napoleon, and echoes might still be heard today in the comments of impatient businessmen and Foreign Office types such as Sir Percy Cradock, who are daily trooped out by the press to urge the more subtle Chinese conceptions of the law upon the new governor of Hong Kong.

But now another Frenchman has finally laid this old chestnut to rest. In *The Immobile Empire*, former Gaullist diplomat Alain Peyrefitte recounts the story of the ill-fated embassy of George Macartney, commissioned by George III to open China to Western (read: British) trade and all its attendant benefits. Drawing on the first-hand recollections of fifteen eyewitnesses from the British side, the observations of French and Portuguese Jesuits resident in Peking, and 420 pages from the imperial records—complete with Emperor Qianlong's vermilion responses in the margins—Peyrefitte paints a vivid portrait of the Chinese and British actors involved and the issues that would ever divide them. In so doing he also demonstrates that the dispute over the kowtow that came to a head in the wee hours of September 14, 1793, extended far beyond "superficial touchiness" to the collision of two mutually exclusive civilizations:

> Deep convictions were at issue—respect for cosmic order on one side, sense of honor on the other. The disagreement was not due, as the British imagined, to misguided interference by junior of-

William McGurn is senior editor of the Far Eastern Economic Review.

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ficials; nor, as the Chinese believed, was it a matter of barbarian ignorance. For the British, it was the refusal of a people who felt borne by the wings of history to humble themselves; for the Chinese, it was the defense of the old rituals, long ago established once and for all, that lay at the very foundations of civilization itself. The impasse of protocol masked a confrontation of two different worlds.

On October 3 Macartney received the Emperor's response to the letter he had delivered from George III. Qianlong had turned down every one of the British requests—for normalized trade, for access to more ports, for a permanent embassy in Peking, etc. In itself China's wholesale refusal is not remarkable. But Peyrefitte discloses that the draft of Qianlong's reply had been ready a full week before Macartney's audience before the imperial court.

Lord Macartney set off from Portsmouth harbor on the morning tide of September 26, 1792, bound for the Middle Kingdom. Europeans had been trading with China for some time, but they did so under onerous constraints: confined to Canton, restricted to certain seasons, forced to deal through extortionist middlemen. The British understood, as Peyrefitte notes, "that trade benefited both seller and buyer, who were like two lovers, each depending on the other for satisfactions neither could provide singly." The Chinese, alás, had no such understanding. With the noxious exception of opium, they remained militantly indifferent to British exports.

And so George III dispatched two brilliant envoys to press the case for more open trade before the Celestial Court: George Macartney, former ambassador to Russia and onetime governor of colonies in Madras and the Caribbean; and Sir George Staunton, who had been Macartney's deputy on his last two postings. Sons of the Enlightenment both, the two men believed, along with their superiors, that a high-level delegation would bring the Chinese to their senses. Even when they were ultimately frustrated in their task, the British continued to rule out the possibility that the Chinese had reached their own conclusions, and instead attributed their failure to the sabotage of malignant officials.

The maddening irony is that Macartney was not exaggerating the advantages to China itself from a more normal intercourse between the two great empires. Had his embassy achieved its relatively modest aims, the whole unhappy sequence of events that followed might have been avoided: no opium wars; no humiliating British retreat from Shanghai; indeed, no Hong Kong and no 1997, maybe even no Communist Party. All this is plausible enough. But those who attribute the failure of the Macartney mission to British arrogance and insensitivity overlook one decisive factor: China herself. Unlike Britain, China was "quintessentially scornful of the merchant, suspicious of business and dismissive of foreign inventions." Not only did the Emperor's court rank commerce at the bottom of the social order, it perceived—quite correctly—that such commerce was inimical to the perpetuation of a status quo that had held for centuries.

This is the fuller story of the expedition, and Peyrefitte tells it well, without condescension, weaving the various accounts into a compelling (if at times contradictory) narrative. But what gives the book its special twist is the author's liberal use of the diary kept by George Staunton's young son. Almost a half century later, Thomas Staunton, by then a member of Parliament and England's foremost China expert, would rise in support of the First Opium War. At the time of the Macartney expedition, however, he was but 11 years old, serving as Macartney's page, and where his elders were inclined to gild the diplomatic lily, young Thomas's boyish candor has been a boon to historians. The first Englishman to learn Chinese, Thomas could hardly have helped but notice the Chinese interpretation of their visit on the banners that greeted their arrival throughout the kingdom: "Envoy Paying Tribute to the Great Emperor."

As the banners implied, the Chinese lacked any concept of equal, sovereign nationhood. In their cosmos, China was the fabled kingdom mid-way between heaven and earth, to which all other states were by definition vassals. Hence the impossibility of exchanging ambassadors (which implied equality) and the inevitable clash over the kowtow. In a nation where custom and worldview constituted an inseparable whole, to agree to the ritual bow to the emperor was to concede inferiority, not offer a sign of respect. Macartney was willing to go down on one knee, as he would to his own monarch, and he hoped this would suffice. But there was no middle ground. "Like it or not," says Peyrefitte, "to perform it was to be incorporated into the Celestial hierarchy."

And so history records the rest. Or does it? According to the official version of events in China's imperial archives, "when the Ambassador entered His Majesty's presence, he was so overcome with awe and nervousness that his legs gave way under him so that he grovelled abjectly on the ground, to all intents and purposes performing an involuntary kowtow." Eventually the Chinese came to believe it themselves.

Not that Peyrefitte takes the British line. To the contrary, he takes pains to demonstrate the cross-purposes at which the Chinese and British protagonists worked, how the underlying logic of their respective cultures propelled them toward a showdown. That each considered itself ("and not without good reason," says Peyrefitte) the apex of civilization only intensified the conflict and made it less likely that either would, or could, give way. "The two countries lived in different mental universes," writes the author, "and the more contact there was between them, the less inclined either was to accept the other's point of view." Another liberal nostrum deflated.

Save for some tired observations on colonialism—whose treatment as a solely Western phenomenon is especially odd in light of China's more virulent strain—Peyrefitte tells his tale well. The occasional allusion to his own diplomatic experience with China as an envoy for Charles de Gaulle too lends a welcome tartness. In the end, however, *The Immobile Empire* owes its strength to an old-fashioned, never-fail formula: a rollicking good story told by a serious man of letters in a superb translation—with obvious and immediate parallels for today. Two centuries after Macartney, says Peyrefitte, "we know more about the motives of the two sides than they did themselves, for we are confidants of both, and of history itself." Are we any wiser? ❐

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COMING ATTRACTIONS: THE MAKING OF AN X-RATED VIDEO

Robert J. Stoller and I. S. Levine

Yale University Press / 246 pages / $30

reviewed by FRANCIS X. ROCCA

To go see our first X-rated movie, my friends and I drove around the Washington Beltway to a Virginia theater we had heard would not card us. We could have gone downtown to Fourteenth Street, but none of us—Montgomery County suburbanites all and students in good standing at a Jesuit boys' high school—was comfortable in the neighborhood of such blatant vice. Even in the shopping-mall multiplex, I resisted touching the sides of my seat, and sat with arms and legs crossed for the entire show.

That was thirteen years ago. Today's curious adolescent can proceed with peace of mind, for revelation is as close as the family VCR any night his parents go out to dinner. Ira Levine, co-author of *Coming Attractions* and himself a sometime porn filmmaker, reports that housewives are also regular watchers: "They rent *Cinderella* for the kids, and *Rain Man* for everyone after dinner, and an X picture for after the kids go to bed."

These proliferating cassettes do not of course produce themselves, yet the makers of this ever more accessible commodity are rarely the subject of journalism, let alone scholarship. This book is a collection of interviews, by Levine and the late UCLA psychiatrist Robert Stoller, of eight porn professionals—two producers, an actor, two actresses, a cinematographer, an editor, and an actress-turned-director—in connection with the making of a recent hard-core video, *Stairway to Paradise*.

The conversations range from the details of work on the set to the peculiarities of life at home. The discussions of hygiene, in a business where unprotected intercourse is de rigueur, are not only revolting but scary. When the authors' informants talk about health at all, they speak of an imminent plague with blasé fatalism.

Somewhat longer shrift is given to another contentious social issue, pornography's degradation of women. Not surprisingly, those who make their living in porn have little use for the radical feminist critiques of Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin, who see X-rated material as a form of sexual assault. According to Nina, star of *Stairway to Paradise*, "Dworkin is a prime example of a woman on a vendetta because no one asked her to the prom." The exploitation of female employees is another matter: one actress claims she was blacklisted for nine months after founding a woman's advocacy group for porn professionals. Yet all the interviewees, male and female, agree that things are worse for men, at least in front of the camera. The "boys" get lower pay and lower billing, and are expected to perform in ways that cannot be faked, at great length and under often stressful conditions. (At one time men could count on the assistance of their co-stars, but it is now considered unprofessional to ask for "fluffing.")

Such a profession influences private life in special ways. On some, it has the entirely predictable effect of making the deviant boring and the normal alluring. Says Sharon, the former actress who now works behind the camera:

> The only erotic fantasies I have are: being with a person that I am totally connected to emotionally, physically, spiritually, intellectually, so that there is a complete relationship. . . . It is because of these movies that I've been able to come back to that healthy space. I've been addicted to sex in the past, I've based relationships on sexual encounters . . . Now they're my friends first.

For the performer with an active career, "a complete relationship" remains necessarily a fantasy. One improvises as much stability as one can. "I couldn't have been in this business if I hadn't had a mate (I have two) and a firm home base," confesses Nina; a footnote informs us that she "lives *en ménage* with a man and a woman." And some, no matter how jaded they become, still find themselves prey to the green-eyed monster. Levine recalls the betrayal that ended one relationship: "If she was doing straight hard-core, I wouldn't have cared. But that she was doing a *bondage* picture with someone other than me . . ."

It is not as if all these people had normal lives before they got into pornography. Porsche Lynn (not her real name) was orphaned at age six, when her father shot her mother and himself; she then moved in with an uncle who ogled her in the shower and gave her unwelcome caresses. Levine's account of relations with his own mom—a phone call home was more like a call to a 900 chat line—is disturbing to say the least.

This anecdotal evidence lends some credibility to Levine's theory that X-rated performers tend to be incest victims, whose experience as children has given them not only an advanced education in sexual technique but also an exaggerated sense of their own sexual appeal (since "god-like" adults fell under its spell), and the habit of receiving "material validation for sexual availability."

Levine insists that pathological motives do not vitiate the result: "By modern standards, Mozart was an abused, exploited child. . . . The knowledge of his distress then does not prevent us from enjoying his music now." This theory, though, falls short of explaining why these people would go into movies instead of prostitution. As Levine himself points out, "a woman doing straight outcalls can make just as much money without leaving behind a permanent public record. And she can make the client wear condoms." The best that the authors can manage is to talk vaguely about "exhibitionism."

There is another puzzle to which neither author offers a conclusive solution. One of several things my teenage friends and I didn't understand as we sat in that suburban theater was that we were watching a relic of a "golden age" already past. In the mid-seventies, hard-core classics such as *The Opening of Misty Beethoven*

Francis X. Rocca is a writer living in New Haven, Connecticut.

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were shot over a number of weeks with budgets in the hundreds of thousands. Nowadays "deluxe" productions take three days. With budgets of often less than twenty thousand, they are shot on videotape instead of more subtle film. The trite plots and inane dialogue make an old Marilyn Chambers vehicle look like *The Rules of the Game*. The sex itself has become formulaic; six sex scenes per tape is now industry standard, and readers of *Coming Attractions* will learn the prescribed number and configuration of men and women in each (three boy-girls, one boy-boy-girl, one girl-girl-boy, and one girl-girl). All the people interviewed here, except for the producers, complain about the constraints on time, money, and creative freedom. They speak of themselves as artists and fantasize about what they could accomplish if they were in charge.

So why, if the X-rated market has in the last decade grown not only larger but more diverse and more cinematically sophisticated—with middle-class marrieds joining the ranks of "raincoaters"—has the product, far from improving to meet the audience's presumably higher standards, only gotten worse? Levine and Stoller think stricter enforcement of "community standards" discourages big investment, but according to producer Bill Holliday, few pornographers go to jail. And even if the law were being aggressively enforced, major metropolitan areas—where community standards are now practically nil—surely contain a large enough audience to justify an upscale product.

The fact is that expensive pornographic movies *are* being made. They are even, says Levine, a growth industry. They just aren't hard-core. "There will be more attempts to sex-up the mainstream products," he predicts, by which he means cases in which "they spend more money on production values and skip the hard-core, but it's essentially a sex movie." He cites *9-1/2 Weeks*, which Porsche points to as a model of the more sophisticated movies she would like to make.

In this age of venereal valetudinarianism, what Levine calls hard-core's "utopian" vision of sex seems almost quaint. And nothing about this book will make its principals more sympathetic—or at least less despicable—than the occasional elegiac tone of the interviews: words of reminiscence for a subculture being vanquished by a slicker, more respectable product. ❐

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DEGENERATE MODERNS: MODERNITY AS RATIONALIZED SEXUAL MISBEHAVIOR

E. Michael Jones

Ignatius Press/259 pages/$16.95

reviewed by GEORGE SIM JOHNSTON

In 1938, the English novelist Aldous Huxley admitted something that the other literary mandarins of his day probably wished he had kept to himself. Huxley's revelation was this: the real reason intellectuals of his generation had embraced modernism was that it gave them license to have unlimited sex. Modern intellectuals, of course, often pose as sexual revolutionaries. But until recently the squalid sex lives of people like Jean-Paul Sartre or Margaret Mead or Bertrand Russell were treated delicately by biographers. It is, after all, difficult to portray as a great friend of humanity someone who on every page is using other people, especially sexual partners, like Kleenex.

Apart from the usual white-washing of liberal icons, there was another reason for the biographical silence, one that has much to do with the spiritual dislocations of our age. Since Luther and Descartes, there has been in the West a notion that what we do with our bodies has no effect on how we use our minds. From this standpoint, it is easy to maintain that a Russell or a Sartre always managed to keep their obsessive sexual lives in a sealed container whenever they sat down to write philosophy. The more selfish and pathological their conduct is revealed to have been, the more fervently their disciples insist that there is no connection between what people do and what they think.

But a recent spate of biographies, notable for their lurid sexual detail, strongly suggest that the private lives of modern intellectuals cannot be breezily dismissed when taking stock of their ideas. A classic example is the economist John Maynard Keynes, the scratch of whose pen turned the Western democracies into fiscal junkies. Keynes was a promiscuous homosexual, but his first biographer, Sir Roy Harrod, refused to admit the existence, much less the significance, of Keynes's orientation. But Keynes would have done a great service if he had begun *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* with the disclosure that he was a Bloomsbury aesthete and practicing homosexual. He could have explained how he and his friends did not believe in self-denial or consider that they had any obligation to posterity. Perhaps as a result we might have lower federal deficits.

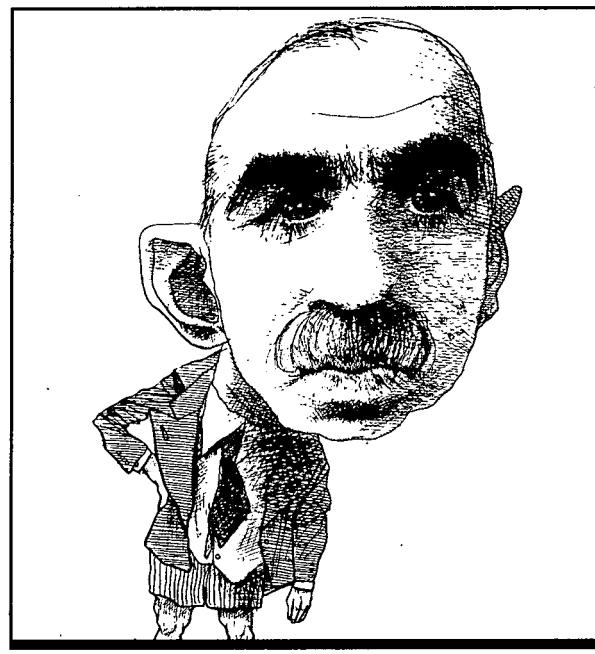
As E. Michael Jones shows in his brilliant new book, *Degenerate Moderns*, Keynes was hardly an isolated case. Jones's thesis is simple: Modernity is rationalized sexual misbehavior. Lust, of course, is a common enough vice. But

> the crucial intellectual event occurs . . . when vices are transmuted into theories, when the "intellectual" sets up shop in rebellion against moral law and therefore in rebellion against truth. All modern "isms" follow as a result of this rebellion. . . . All of them can best be understood in light of the moral disorders of their founders, proponents, and adherents.

The claim that the private vices o intellectuals can spread through the whole fabric of society like an ugly stain will land Jones in the same hot water a Paul Johnson, whose *Intellectuals* wa another rogue's gallery of secula prophets who preached public benevo lence while leading lives of the utmos moral squalor. Both writers show that the twin creeds of modernity—persona hedonism and social utopianism—are the products of the disordered lives of mid dle-class intellectuals. But Jones's book breaks new ground in probing the subtle regions of the human heart where desire confronts truth and rearranges it for its own ends. *Degenerate Moderns* begins with a quote from the German philosopher Josef Pieper, whose thoughts abou this matter could not be more unfashionable or correct:

> Since we nowadays think that all a man needs for acquisition of truth is to exert his brain more or less vigorously, and since we consider an ascetic approach to knowledge hardly sensible, we have lost the awareness of the close bond that links the knowledge of the truth to the condition of purity. Thomas [Aquinas] says that unchastity's first-born daughter is blindness of spirit. Only he who wants nothing for himself, who is not subjectively "interested," can know the truth. On the other hand, a selfishly corrupt will to pleasure destroys both resoluteness of spirit and the ability of the psyche to listen in silent attention to the language of reality.

Modern academics, unembarrassed by metaphysics, will scoff a the notion that the spiritual structure of our personality is deeply



George Sim Johnston is a writer living in New York City.

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sensitive to sexual behavior. Nor will they like the idea that, under the guise of scientific objectivity, thinkers like Freud, Jung, Margaret Mead, and Alfred Kinsey constantly distorted the truth so that it would fit their peculiar sexual agendas. But Jones makes a strong case that this, indeed, is what modernity has been all about.

Jones's first "degenerate modern" (he could have found a subtler phrase) is the anthropologist Margaret Mead, whose reporting of the sexual habits of Samoans became a bible of modern paganism. Mead went to Samoa as a young graduate student in 1925; she spent a mere six weeks learning the language and then set about investigating the sex lives of the natives. The result was *Coming of Age in Samoa*, which has sold millions of copies in a dozen languages. In novelistic detail, Mead painted a paradise where sex was plentiful and guilt-free. A day in Mead's Samoa begins as "lovers slip home from trysts beneath the palm trees or in the shadow of beached canoes." Her Samoans "laugh at stories of romantic love, scoff at fidelity," and smile on "casual homosexual practices." Young Samoans, according to Mead, get so much sex in every direction that their adolescence is entirely free of the stresses which typify this period in more advanced cultures.

Mead's book was seized on by intellectuals like Bertrand Russell as proof that the sexual strictures of Judeo-Christianity were cultural accidents and that people could get along fine without them. Unfortunately, as anthropologists like Derek Freeman eventually showed, every detail of Mead's book turned out to be false. If anything, Samoans are more puritanical about sex than Westerners and place a far higher premium on female virginity. As for Samoan adolescence being a blissful period of sexual ease, Freeman found that the suicide rate for this group was and is unusually high and that many of the suicides relate to "shame at illicit sexual unions." And against Mead's claim that the idea of rape was "completely foreign to the Samoan mind," Freeman discovered one of the highest rates of forcible rape in the world, then and now.

Coming of Age in Samoa turned out to be, in Jones's words, "about as scientific

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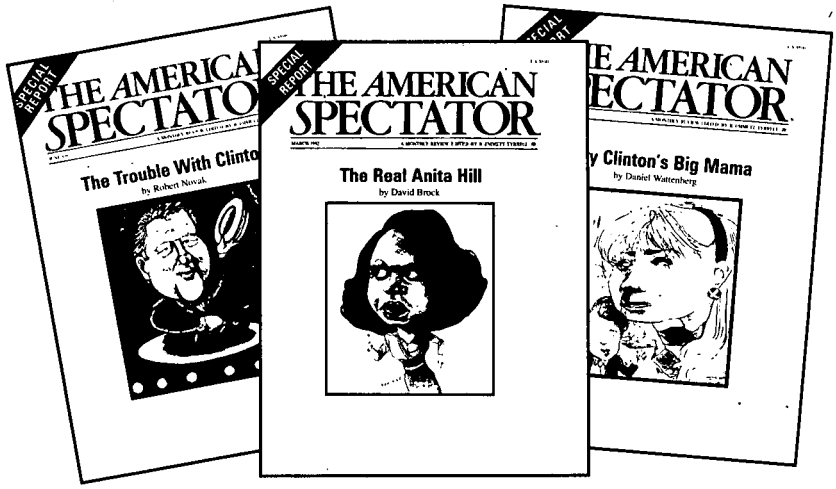

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as the screenplay of *Blue Lagoon*." How, then, did Mead get everything so wrong? If Samoans are as sexually strict as Freeman and other anthropologists say, where did she get the idea that they regard adultery as unimportant? The answer comes from Mead herself. At the time she was examining the Samoans, Mead, who was married, had two affairs going, one with a man and one with a woman (the anthropologist Ruth Benedict, who was Mead's lesbian lover until Benedict's death in 1948). The young Mead belonged to a set of New York intellectuals who discovered sexual liberation decades before Haight-Ashbury. The relatively new discipline of anthropology lent itself to the rationalization of their behavior. As one of Mead's bitter ex-husbands wrote to her, her brand of anthropology was simply a "dishonest way of treating your private affairs."

It doesn't say much for the discipline of anthropology that Mead's book was, and still is, treated as a classic. As for Mead herself, her later life was spent making goofy, oracular pronouncements while descending a spiral of drugs (Dexedrine), sex, and the occult. This last item is of interest. In the thirties, Mead and Benedict were visiting a Harlem necromancer—as clients, not as researchers. After being diagnosed with cancer in 1978, Mead started visiting a Chilean psychic, with whom she discussed, among other things, the two "spirit guides" who accompanied her. Mead's biographer, Jane Howard, quotes someone who knew Mead as saying: "Many of Margaret's friends were most anxious lest anyone know that she, this public essence of rationality, went to a faith healer. . . . They were jolly lucky that the *National Enquirer* didn't find out."

Dabbling in the occult, Jones demonstrates, has been a sideline for a number of modernist figures who are supposed to have been paragons of rationality. Freud was obsessed with the devil and first took cocaine on *Walpurgisnacht*, the night of April 30, 1884, in liquid form, in imitation, as a number of commentators agree, of the way Faust drank the magic potion in Goethe's play, which was being performed in Vienna at the time. Carl Jung, Freud's disciple who later broke with him, was involved with alchemy and UFOs. Marx as a young man wrote poems to Satan. This is the dark, irrational underside of modernity that still awaits its master interpreter. It illustrates Chesterton's remark that people who don't believe in God will believe in anything.

The primary villain in Jones's line-up is Freud, whom Jones correctly views as an ideologue of atheism rather than a scientist. One of Freud's disciples wrote to him excitedly in 1930 that psychoanalysis "has reversed all values, it has conquered Christianity, disclosed the Antichrist, and liberated the spirit of resurgent life from the ascetic ideal." The chief goal of Freud's psychology was the transvaluation of all values. And at that it was very successful. It certainly hasn't cured many people. Toward the end of his life, Freud himself lamented that "our cures are less effective than Lourdes." (Freud, like many modern rebels, seems to have been obsessed by the Catholic

Church.) Jones's brilliant treatment of Freud suggests the reason why, in the long run, Freud's main impact on the history of psychoanalysis will have been merely to delay the introduction of pharmacology as the primary means of dealing with neurotic disorders. The Oedipus complex, for which there has never been a shred of scientific evidence, turns out to be, in Jones's words, "nothing more than Freud's personal history disguised and writ large." Freud detested his father (whom he called a "pervert") and had a violent sexual attraction toward his sister-in-law, Minna Bernays, which may or may not have been consummated. To say that the rest of us have the same compulsion is, in Jones's words, rather like Bonnie and Clyde telling us that mankind has a universal compulsion to rob banks.

But Freud, according to disciples like Peter Gay, is to be exempted from the sexual analysis that Freudians use to undermine the credibility of everyone else. Here we get to the Achilles heel of modernism. Darwin, Marx, and Freud all claimed in one way or another that the human animal is driven by blind, irrational forces. "All thinking," writes Gay in his biography of Freud, "including the most abstract and objective, can be shown to have nonrational sources." As Jones writes, "If Gay really means 'all thinking,' then he must be speaking of Freudian thinking as well, in which case he has demolished his own ideology." Freudianism, like all modern "isms," is self-cancelling. If the human mind is the plaything of blind, material forces, then its productions, including *Das Kapital* and *The Interpretation of Dreams*, have no objective value whatsoever.

Some might disagree with Jones's use of biography to undermine the central tenets of modernity. Shouldn't theories be considered on their own merits, rather than on the basis of the messy lives of their progenitors? Well, yes—if the theory is truly scientific and therefore subject to what scientists call falsification. Newton was as weird as they come, but his theories can be tested and shown to be true for most of material reality. But modern ideologies are not scientific; they have an explanation for everything (natural selection, economic repression, the unconscious) and so finally explain nothing: when they run into contradictions, they simply mutate. And since many of them began as deliberate distortions of reality, the biographies of their founders are very much to the point.

Lately, we have been told that history, understood as an Hegelian clash of paradigms, is coming to an end. According to thinkers like Francis Fukuyama, democracy and pluralism, despite complications in the Balkans and elsewhere, are the final terminus of mankind. Books like *Degenerate Moderns* make one wonder, though. Is mankind going to spend the rest of its existence in what Jones calls "ever-constricting ruts" of sensuality and materialism? There are disturbances in the modern psyche which can elude a theorist sitting unmolested in a think tank near the Potomac, but which may yet play themselves out on a large canvas. The question is whether modernity turns out to be a free lunch. If the lives of its founders are any indication, that is a dubious proposition. ❐

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WHOREDOM IN KIMMAGE: IRISH WOMEN COMING OF AGE

Rosemary Mahoney

Houghton Mifflin / 307 pages / $21.95

reviewed by CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

In the course of two long volumes of autobiography, which deal in loving detail with such minutiae as his childhood toys and distant relatives' drinking habits, the Irish short story-writer Frank O'Connor never mentioned either of his wives—not once. Similarly, a friend of mine from the North Dublin neighborhood of Ballymun had an uncle who visited the same local pub every night for thirty years, until one night he sent a profuse note of apology to his friends that he would be missing his evening card game, due to his having to attend a funeral—his wife's. As recently as the 1950s, only 40 percent of Irish men in their early thirties had ever married—the lowest rate in the world. In Ireland the sexes are more separate than in any Western country.

For the Irish-American writer Rosemary Mahoney, this separation implies inequality, an inferior status for women—and she lays the blame squarely on the Roman Catholic church and the baleful influence of its sexual morality on Ireland's laws and culture. This emphasis leads Mahoney to overstress certain issues of only marginal importance to most Irish women (like homosexuality) and to short-change others that are of paramount importance (like equality in the workplace). But to grant her her subject: Divorce, abortion, and homosexuality remain outlawed in Ireland. And although contraception was legalized in 1979, "even the most liberal people," Mahoney writes, "are thinking in a way that is still, at its foundation, Roman Catholic."

If Mahoney's diagnosis is simple-minded, her approach is complex. "As separate as men and women are in Ireland," she writes, "it is difficult to separate them." So she eavesdrops on Irish men and women for several months in both Dublin and the village of Corofin in County Clare, in hopes that the root of the peculiar Irish battle between the sexes will be found in a "vehement, mistrustful, precipitate way of relating" among the people themselves. It is an approach that has real promise. Mahoney has an effortlessly pretty prose style, and an uncanny eye for the littlest things Irish people do: that they sometimes greet you by grabbing your forearm, not your hand (or, when driving, by lifting an index finger off the steering wheel); that they say *stchewpid* (for "stupid") and *feck* and *shite*; that they give each other nicknames like Foxy John, the Mouth, and Over He Went. As a tour of Ireland through the lens of one particularly vexing problem, this book is a delight.

An ability to withhold judgment—which at times amounts to a delightful self-deprecation at the stupid situations Mahoney has to throw herself into—is the book's saving grace and its glory. *Whoredom in Kimmage* is an exquisitely funny book—and it is the *only* funny feminist book. In a hilarious scene in a Dublin lesbian bar called J.J. Smythe's, Mahoney nervously tries to make conversation with two big women, who are pretty but menacing, with huge biceps, crewcuts, and tattoos. "I heard myself asking—unbelievably—*So, what do you girls do?* to which the redhead replied, *Work in a prison*, to which I said, *Prison! Nice!*"

Sometimes this acuity takes us right into the rift Mahoney wishes to expose, as when she points out a lunatic woman to a country farmer giving her a lift into town:

> She wore a carrot-colored turban on her head. I asked the sweating farmer if he knew her.
>
> "I do, of course. That's Mamie Duffy. We call her Mad Mamie. She is always going on about having been raped." He smirked in a wicked way that made me distrust him. "But she was not raped. I suppose she is still hoping. She is what we call an eccentric."

Here Mahoney does the right thing with an anecdote: follows it only until it ceases yielding insights—in this case into the callousness and brutality of rural Ireland's sexual dynamic.

Unfortunately, though, Mahoney has stacked her argument through her choice of interview subjects. Her Corofin rustics are almost exclusively men, and men of a particular kind—quaint, impotent, pathetic. Her Dubliners are, in general, the most radical, cosmopolitan, and alienated women she can hunt down. In the company of the former, Mahoney shows off her daunting descriptive gifts; with the latter, she formulates her political agenda.

The result is a book that lurches schizophrenically between Corofin and Dublin, and every time Mahoney re-introduces us to her Dublin activists, it's as if she has

Christopher Caldwell is assistant managing editor of The American Spectator.

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taken leave of a literary talent that amounts to brilliance to shill for people of half her intelligence. Mahoney's gifts are not ideological. She is alarmed to find that "the Irish Constitution refers to women only three times and in a restrictive and paternalistic fashion"—which is three times more than the American Constitution mentions them in any fashion. And when she gets into a conversation with an affable feminist ideologue, Mahoney is apt to get dragged along by the nose.

For example, the well-mannered deference she lauds in County Clare becomes—once she is discussing it in a gathering of lesbians—something of a national tragedy:

> I told the women that I had noticed that if you bumped into an Irish woman and it was entirely your fault, she would spin around and say, "Excuse me! How clumsy of me!" And if you went into a shop and asked "How much is that book?" the salesperson would invariably say, "Three pounds, is that all right?" as though asking permission to charge this much.
>
> Kate said, "You're absolutely right, Rose. And it's not trivial. It's sad."
>
> "It's something you have to fight within yourself or you'll be apologizing all the time," said Mary.
>
> "I have such a losing battle with that," said Kate. "I go over to Germany and go into shops, and people push in front of me in the queue. That's one thing I am not able to do."

Traditional Irish families, for whom Mahoney otherwise feels a great fondness, are treated by her Dublin friends as atavistic barbarians. "Around the country," says Peg, a lesbian ex-nun, "you'll find an awful lot of women who are getting in trouble for their differentness, but it must be much more difficult for a working-class woman in Dublin. She cannot escape. She must have the children and wash up and feed and clothe them. Men are also caught up in that."

Contented Catholic women appear only sidelong in these pages, like the shrewish Clare woman who thinks Anita Hill lied, agrees with the acquittal of William Kennedy Smith, and tells Mahoney, "There's nothing wrong with Ireland. We're fine, and we don't need smart-ass writers telling us what's wrong with us."

There is a limit to how much Mahoney's sensitivity to the human heart can tell us. What of the whole complex of crippling taxes and bait-and-switch social initiatives that have turned Ireland into a labor-exporting country? The washing machine, after all, has surely done more to liberate women than the diaphragm, and the government-engineered stultification of Ireland's economy has surely done as much as Canon Law to make the typical Irish marriage a stressful thing.

Because she has so artificially limited the women's agenda to constitutional reform and secularization, Mahoney seems to believe that the objectives of Irish feminists are moderate, finite, and fulfillable—"I'm quite against abortion myself," says one woman, "but I don't think it should be in the Constitution"—while accepting the assertion of Ruth Riddick and other abortion advocates that it is pro-lifers who are using abortion as a stalking horse for a wider anti-woman or anti–working class agenda. But with the Irish sexual left using the European Court of Human Rights to get abortion and homosexuality legalized in Ireland, the other side feels the same way: "The very people who want women priests," says one woman at a League of Mary meeting, "also want divorce, contraception, and abortion."

And they're right. There are, of course, plenty of excuses to make these reforms seem like necessities; Mahoney is particularly struck by the number of Irish babies born out of wedlock and Ireland's rate of infanticide. But neither of these is a new phenomenon, and both occur at far lower rates than in countries with divorce and abortion—like America. If Ireland gets new laws, as Mahoney clearly hopes it will, it will not be because circumstances demand them, but because Irish people simply want more sexual license, and are willing to weaken family and church to get it. Mahoney seems to realize as much, when she asks Irish President Mary Robinson "Would it not be difficult, now that Ireland is becoming a member of Europe, to hold onto these things?"

Robinson's attitude towards change is the most fatuous one possible: She thinks that Ireland can somehow influence Europe without being influenced in return, that Ireland's biggest contribution to the EEC will be "self-development and family-based participation," that the Irish language, which has been losing speakers for the last century, will thrive as Ireland becomes more "modern." "It's more interesting for people from outside Ireland to come and visit Ireland if we have our separate language and culture," says Robinson. "That's what would interest a lot of Europeans." Robinson is mistaking her country's *folk art* for its culture, and assuming that as long as she keeps the former intact she can frig around with the latter without affecting the essential integrity of her society. It is a ludicrous proposition.

Mahoney mentions a Dublin lesbian who has never left Dublin and yet feels "personally pained by her nation's character." But Mahoney is slower to remark on a different strain of the same ambiguity among the Dublin elites, one that is embodied by the social-democratic Fine Gael party as it developed under Garrett FitzGerald (whom Mahoney reveres) in the 1980s, and which reaches its apotheosis in Mary Robinson. It is the dilemma of the elite in any small country or disempowered ethnic group. In part, they are not only fascinated by, but also ferociously proud of, the culture that shaped them; in part, they are so embarrassed by its provincialism that they loathe it from the very bottom of their hearts. ❐

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THE REAL WORLD ORDER: ZONES OF PEACE/ZONES OF TURMOIL

Max Singer and Aaron Wildavsky

Chatham House/212 pages/$25

reviewed by PETER J. SPIRO

Foreign policy thinkers continue to cast about for a unifying framework with which to confront the post–Cold War world. The aim is for something in the nature of George Kennan's pathbreaking "X" article at the onset of the last seismic shift in world affairs. Kennan's task was a cakewalk compared to that of his successors; where he confronted only changed relationships among states, today's observers must consider the prospect of a world in which the whole dynamic of global relationships may have changed.

Max Singer and the late Aaron Wildavsky have taken a shot at the problem in *The Real World Order*. They posit that international affairs in the post–Cold War world will be driven by a new bipolarity—between the zones of peace and democracy on the one hand, and the zones of turmoil and development on the other.

Within the democratic sphere, war is no longer a serious possibility, nor—for the first time in modern history—will state-to-state relationships be determined by the balance of military power. The zones of democracy now comprise Western Europe, the United States and Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and Japan, or about 15 percent of the world's total population. (Costa Rica, Israel, Botswana, South Korea, and other countries may be democratic, but are not part of a "zone.") Unlike during the Cold War, the peace these countries now enjoy is a *real* peace, "not only the absence of war but also freedom from fear of war."

With this security will come the capacity to devolve powers of governance to more responsive local levels. Subnational ethnic groups such as the Québécois, Scots, and Catalans will be afforded more self-government, even independence. Paradoxically, a greater cohesion will develop among the democracies, as other identities—"I am an environmentalist, a manufacturer, a city-dweller, etc. before I am German, English, or American"—cut across national loyalties and give rise to alternative institutional allegiances, further diminishing the possibility of armed conflict. National governments within the zones of democracy will no longer enjoy anything approaching a monopoly over foreign-policymaking, challenged not by one (half-) world government from above, but rather by a multitude of uncoordinated transnational ties and institutions from below.

On the other side of the new world divide, in the Bosnias, the Somalias, and Chinas of the world, it will be pretty much business as usual, "the same old stuff of war, famine, and mutual carnage." Power will continue to be either centralized in the hands of the nonaccountable or fractured into anarchy. In the short term, conditions in the zones of turmoil will likely get worse, as characterized most notably by aggravated instability in the former Soviet Union. But in the long term, this book predicts, countries in these zones will inevitably move towards democracy; they are zones not just of turmoil but also of development. Economic development will bring with it political development at the same time as the zones of democracy will provide a perfected model of sustained peace to which to aspire. Indeed, with the end of Communism, democracy has attained "exclusive legitimacy" among world systems. Singer and Wildavsky maintain that the world will thus witness an inexorable, and ultimately total, extension of the zones of democracy to engulf the zones of turmoil.

In the meantime—the authors suppose the process might take a century or two—there is the matter of how the democracies should deal with the non-democracies, especially where they stumble along the road of progress. The pace and success of development in the zones of turmoil will be "overwhelmingly determined by local conditions," about which the democracies will have little control, or indeed interest. To the extent we can help, bilateral policymaking and foreign assistance should be aimed at persuading marginal or non-democracies to reduce legal and economic obstacles to growth created by their own governments.

As for direct intervention, the democracies should act only in concert and only to alleviate particular horrors of war and oppression. In the short term, the U.S. should continue to exert strong leadership among its counterpart nations; "in the long run, if the other great democracies are not going to be responsible actors in relation to the zones of turmoil, the zones of turmoil will have to get along without democratic intervention." Europe and Japan should be encouraged to join us as superpowers (the latter at least through such status symbols as a seat on the Security Council) so that they can participate as true equals in the process, enhancing the international authority of such interventions as are pursued. But this collective decision-making should not extend beyond the democracies; in particular, intervention should not be held hostage to the "vote-trading" process of the United Nations.

So much for procedure. As for principles, the authors offer only that they will gradually develop through practice. On the one hand, the U.S. and other "great democracies" should be prepared, for altruistic reasons if no other, to intervene "to protect democracy, preserve peace, defeat aggression, and prevent or stop governments from killing large numbers of their citizens." On the other, we must under-

Peter J. Spiro is a resident associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a Council on Foreign Relations international affairs fellow.

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stand that intervention often proves a long-term liability for all involved, by interrupting or distorting the necessary trials of political development.

Whatever the terms of interaction between the two spheres, however, it is clear that the developing world will not pose a threat to the democratic one. Peace is divisible. Combined with the absence of any such threat from within the democratic community (and no present democracy, Japan included, is likely to revert to nondemocracy), this conclusion has profound policy consequences. *The Real World Order* calls for maintaining a military force that "can quickly deliver military power anywhere in the world with intimidating and overwhelming effectiveness." But its analysis may more likely be used to justify greatly reduced military spending. For all the emphasis on quality over quantity, in this book and elsewhere, military might ultimately depends on how much money backs it up, as perceived domestic threats will naturally take an even bigger share of public resources if no such threats are perceived from abroad. Altruism won't count for much at the budget table, especially if, as Singer and Wildavsky hold, intervention will often do more harm than good.

The fact is that national power (including foreign economic aid, which Singer and Wildavsky would like to see increased) will much more likely be garnered and projected in the context of competition. Perhaps we shouldn't place all our bets just yet on effortless victory for the democrats. Democracy is, after all, indigenous to Western civilization only. As Samuel P. Huntington, another candidate Kennan, notes: "The very notion that there could be a 'universal civilization' is a Western idea, directly at odds with the particularism [of other cultures]." It is not now apparent, for example, that the Islamic world will inevitably arrive at democratic governance even within the course of a century. Singer and Wildavsky repeatedly describe countries in the zones of turmoil as moving through a necessary, difficult, and unpredictable "national adolescence" on the way to full democratic maturity. The analogy is a useful one, but adolescents do not always grow up to be like their parents, or even to be functioning members of society. ❐

MOSCOW BULLETIN

Bolshie Ballet

by Jonas Bernstein

As we go to press, Boris Yeltsin and his enemies from the dissolved Soviet parliament appeared to be nearing a showdown, as troops loyal to Yeltsin were preparing to storm the White House, held by supporters of Aleksandr Rutskoi and Ruslan Khasbulatov. Here is a last-minute report from our man in Moscow:

Michael and I were relieved to see the phalanx of special interior ministry troops and OMON riot police as we left the White House grounds. "It feels like crossing back through the DMZ," he muttered. (I had told him to keep the English to a minimum during our half-hour walkabout; a CNN cameraman had been beaten with a lead pipe the previous day.)

Indeed, the territory of the rebel Russian government is not what you would call an oasis for two expatriate American Jews. The wall along the main road leading into the White House is now adorned with graffiti: "Yeltsin—Agent of the USA," "Yeltsin—Yid," "Kozyrev—Yid." A couple of full dumpsters had been spray-painted with the words "Gaidar's Box." (This struck me as too witty to have been done by the typical supporter of "President" Aleksandr Rutskoi and Ruslan Khasbulatov; I suspected an outside prankster.) A lone demonstrator stood at the first barricade inside the police cordon, waving a huge red flag reading "Our home is the Soviet Union!"

Anti-Semitism, anti-Americanism, and paranoia are the order of the day. To call these people Communists would not be completely accurate. While there are certainly many members of Russia's new Communist parties among them, most in this crowd are the kind who love Stalin but hate Lenin, Trotsky, and the other original Bolshies. (Who were Jew-Masons, you see.) Theirs is the politics of resentment, big-time. Perhaps you could call them National Bolsheviks.

I made my first visit to the Russian parliament building the evening after Yeltsin gave the hard-line legislators their pink slips. White House "defenders" with Kalashnikovs slung over their shoulders were running all over the place. Most of the men are apparently volunteers from the Union of Officers, an organization of fascistic military men. (The following evening, the group's leader, Col. Stanislav Terekhov, led an abortive attempt to enter the CIS military command center, in which a policeman and an innocent bystander were killed.)

On a side street, several hundred yards from the White House, a TV crew was attempting to interview several OMON riot police. They were constantly interrupted by a middle-aged woman yelling "Foreigners out! Jews out!"—over and over again, just to drive the point home.

At the main entrance of the parliament building was a cardboard notice that here you could enlist as a White House "defender." A wall nearby was pasted with various proclamations and political tracts, one of which made repeated references to the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. Next to it was a Yeltsin poster, at the top of which was scrawled: "Who sold Russia?"

People were crowding around someone who was selling newspapers. I was lucky enough to purchase a copy of *Svyatoy Gorod* (Holy City), which bills

Jonas Bernstein is a freelance journalist living in Moscow.

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itself as "the Russian-Palestinian voice." Its specialty is clever political cartoons. The one on the front page shows Yasir Arafat raising the Israeli flag, with dollar bills hanging out of his pocket. (Get it?) Those on the back page are straight *Völkischer Beobachter*: for example, a caricature of a Jew (with a star of David on his shoulder, so you don't confuse his prominent nose and five o'clock shadow with Arafat's) kneeling on the Torah and kissing a statue of a calf (marked "gold" for the slow-witted.)

My next purchase was the house organ of the Russky Sobor (Russian Council) movement. The leading light of the grouplet is former KGB general Aleksandr Sterligov, who sports a Radovan Korotich hairdo and has never been seen smiling. Inside is a fascinating article entitled "Revolution in the Person of Rostropovich," obviously timed for the maestro's Red Square concert with the National Symphony Orchestra. Its thesis is that the previous defenders of the White House—those who opposed the August 1991 putsch—were Israeli agents. "At the highest echelon of the White House defenders were fighters from the Irgun and Beitar, assembling under the white-blue Zionist flag."

I tried to catch the NSO performance in Red Square on Sunday, September 26, but was running late. As I approached the square along with a horde of music lovers, a series of loud explosions suddenly echoed around the city. Everyone in the crowd looked startled for a moment, but as we entered the square the music became audible, and we realized that we were hearing the finale to the "1812 Overture."

It must be noted that Yeltsin's rule since September 21 doesn't exactly comport with our ideas of town-meeting democracy. Commonwealth Television (Channel 1) has become a virtual mouthpiece for the president. Channel 1 carried no report of the regional leaders' opposition to Yeltsin's decree the day after they met in St. Petersburg. Russian Television (Channel 2), however, did, and in general has been much more objective in its reporting.

Even prior to the decree, there were signs that parts of the state media were feeling government pressure. A week before, the staff of *Itogi* (Results), perhaps the most respected news analysis show in Russia, had resigned en masse, citing interference from the Yeltsin administration. In his French TV interview prior to the Yeltsin decree, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn made the same point. When he returns to Russia, the writer said, "I will not evade the press, yet I must say that the press today (so that you should not delude yourselves) is by far not independent."

A new pro-Yeltsin newspaper called *President* has suddenly appeared, put out by the "Moscow Regional Fund to Support the First President of Russia." It appears to be trying to match the opposition's level of discourse. In a satirical Lifestyle section, it shows a photo of Russian Constitutional Court judge Valery Zorkin, who ruled Yeltsin's edict unconstitutional, and in a Russian wordplay implies that he is a criminal. It also calls him a *limitchik*, a word referring to workers from the provinces who, during the Soviet period, were given special permission to come to Moscow and work at menial jobs. Whatever one thinks of Zorkin, and he is hardly a figure worthy of admiration, this term is derogatory in the extreme, and reflects an elitism among Muscovites that is the result of their formerly high position in the Soviet pecking order.

Perhaps I'm being too—well, American. First of all, the opposition newspapers—*Sovietskaya Rossiya*, the fascist weekly *Dyen*, etc.—are still churning out far worse invective, without interference from the government. A country emerging from three-quarters of a century of totalitarianism is not going to conduct politics like a PTA meeting.

Still, some good democrats are beginning to question Yeltsin's hard line. At this writing, even his vice minister Sergei Shakhrai has come out in support of a compromise—for simultaneous presidential and parliamentary elections. Yeltsin could appear to the free world in a very different guise if he chooses a violent, Waco-style solution to the White House impasse. It is a solution, it must be said, that he appears to be contemplating.

Several blocks away from the White House, at the big Stalinist building in front of Barrikadnaya metro station, twenty or so military trucks had arrived. Inside were some 300 troops from the interior ministry's elite Dzherzhinsky division, awaiting deployment—among those who would move into position to storm the White House a few days later. The Commies, who had already made Barrikadnaya a kind of forward base, went ape. They surrounded the vehicles and berated the soldiers—who looked all of 18—for carrying out the orders of the "criminal Yeltsin."

The young soldiers remained cool. Some paid no attention to the taunts, while others fielded them.

"Why are you going to shoot the people?" one was asked.

"We're not going to shoot the people," he replied.

"Then why are you wearing that?" continued his interlocutor, pointing to his flak jacket.

"Because it's warm."

The soldiers asked me for cigarettes. When I held out the pack, one old bag roundly cursed me out.

Inside the White House, the opposition luminaries were appointing a defense minister here, a security minister there; summoning imaginary troops from the Russian heartland; issuing edicts and proclamations. In the wake of this kind of behavior, gibes about madmen calling themselves Napoleon have gotten a lot of mileage in Moscow since September 21.

Ex-parliamentary speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov is generally distrusted by the lighter-skinned "national patriots." During one of my visits to the parliament, the crowds outside listened attentively as the loudspeakers broadcast an attempt by Sergei Baburin, the pretty-boy leader of the fascist/Leninist Russian Unity parliamentary bloc, to replace Khasbulatov.

I feel a little sorry for Ruslan Imranovich. Watching Khasbulatov on TV, dressed in a black double-breasted jacket, black shirt, and purple tie, I was reminded of former Noriega crony Rigoberto "Rigo" Paredes, a gold-Rolex-wearing anti-Yankee "legislator" from Panama's ruling Revolutionary Democratic Party, who drove around town in a Jeep Cherokee with *¡Yo digo Rigo!* emblazoned on the side.

But poor Khasbulatov is a fish out of water among the White House defenders—a Chechen politico in a sea of racist, xenophobic Russian nationalists. In fact, there has been a lot of speculation that, with all of his pronunciamentos, insults, and predictions of war, he has finally lost his mind. In one TV interview, asked where he will end up at the end of this, he replied: "Jail, probably." ❐

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CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 12)

legalized abortion is lost." My case is quite simply this: that the battle has yet to be waged. . . . The true perpetrators of the "anguish" of the abortion issue are the propagandist media who refuse to simply display the argument in a factual, unbiased way. If the American people were ever given the opportunity to see with their own eyes the "residue" of every abortion, if they were able to hear and read the positions of the pro-life leadership without it being presented as fanatical fodder, the debate could commence. Until then, in the free market of ideas, the pro-abortion position is media-subsidized, a false indicator of the state of the "moral economy." . . .

—Joseph K. Cox
Pottstown, Pennsylvania

Historian Edmund Morris failed to do his homework. Ronald Reagan was no doubt touched by the tragedy of his stillborn child in 1947, but not enough to keep him from signing, as governor of California, the most liberal abortion law ever passed by a legislative body in this country. The California law, in fact, serves as a model for the reproductive freedom bill now being pushed in Congress. Opposition to abortion by Reagan and Bush (who used to be on the national board of Planned Parenthood) is of a more recent vintage, as is the conversion to the "pro-choice" side by Jesse Jackson, Al Gore, and Richard Gephardt. Contrary to what Morris claims, abortion is mainly a political and not a moral issue.

—John Romano
Indianapolis, Indiana

I enjoyed reading "In Memoriam, Christina Reagan" by Edmund Morris up to the final paragraph, wherein he mentions God and His involvement in abortion. Mr. Morris rightly presumes that God "knows what He's about," although this is a rather glib and offhanded way to describe that particular aspect of our Creator. Let me point out, however, that abortions are performed by men and women and not by God. Any implication otherwise is disgraceful. . . .

—Edward D. Lewis
New Britain, Connecticut

The Guns of August

The review by Jeremy A. Rabkin of Gary Kleck's and David B. Kopel's books on gun control (*TAS*, August 1993) is an unconvincing apologia for the unregulated possession of firearms. Rabkin's reference to freedom of choice on abortion as analogous to the right to bear arms strains at a gnat. The real issue of gun control is not whether it is wrong to take an innocent life, but whether some effort should be made to reduce the random, irresponsible use of guns in acts of violence. However minor its effect may be on criminal activity, it is hard to see how regulations on the sale and possession of guns can be objected to by those who use guns for recreation. Their use for self-protection only leads to further violence.

The citation of Article II of the Bill of Rights as a guarantee of the right to bear arms is misleading. That article is premised on the need for "a well regulated Militia" of armed citizens, as opposed to a standing army.

—Glenn Critton
St. Paul, Minnesota

I was fascinated by Gary Kleck's debunking of a favorite gun-control argument: Guns are used in many American suicides (true). Ergo, if you confiscate all guns, the number of suicides will be reduced accordingly (whoa!). Why then, asks Kleck, does gun-owning America have a much lower suicide rate than many gun-controlled societies? Reviewer Jeremy A. Rabkin suggests "it may be gun ownership is steadying to the nerves," but does not elaborate.

Gun ownership "steadies the nerves" because it provides control. A gun-owner stressed out by business reverses or family catastrophe nevertheless has the confidence to hang on for at least a few more days: something might turn up and, even if the very worst should happen, his escape remains secure. In a gun-controlled society, however, a depressed person has to invest more thought and effort into creating an opportunity for suicide. Rather than letting an opportunity slide and risk being trapped in a hateful situation, he will go through with it while he is sure he can.

—Hugo S. Cunningham
Somerville, Massachusetts

Politically Koresh (cont.)

With regard to Daniel Wattenberg's article "Gunning for Koresh" (*TAS*, August 1993), I find it odd that the Feds have yet to come forward to account for the illegal firearms that Koresh was accused of stockpiling. Given the deadly outcome, I would have expected, by now, a tarnished Department of Justice stumbling over itself in releasing such damning evidence to a gun-hating media—unless, heaven forbid, Koresh's guns were legal.

—Shawn R. Dodson
Port Orchard, Washington

Daniel Wattenberg's article on the Waco tragedy was well researched and shows punctilious attention to detail. As a cartoon of the bumbling of ATF law enforcement, it is all very interesting and worthy of attention.

But why divert the focus of attention from the villain of the piece—the self-centered monster who called himself Koresh, a megalomaniac who conned gullible followers in the name of religion? And as a final act of supreme vanity knowingly chose a fiery death for his hypnotized disciples and innocent children, in fulfillment of his apocalyptic vision? . . .

—Thayer Smith M.D.
Downey, California

After reading "Gunning for Koresh" by Mr. Daniel Wattenberg, I only hope you fine gentlemen and gentlewomen at *The American Spectator* have spotless records and apostolic references. Or someday I may be reading about another stand-off between ATF agents and "dangerous, right-wing fanatics," but this time in Arlington, Virginia.

—John R. Swisher
Columbus, Ohio

Conservatives are making a big mistake by trying to defend "Jim Jones with a Gun" (David Koresh) against the government. Our support for the First and Second Amendments should not be translated into a defense of a former drug-using rock guitarist who abused girls and guns. . . . David Koresh was not "right-wing," and he doesn't deserve any tears from conservatives, religious or otherwise. He was a nut and pervert.

Wattenberg's theory for the raid is very unique. He suggests that the ATF decided to take out Koresh in part to

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divert attention from sexual harassment charges against the agency made by the CBS "60 Minutes" program. Wattenberg doesn't mention that ATF regarded the charges as questionable and erroneous and that Accuracy in Media in its February-A 1993 *AIM Report* debunked most of them.

Were Koresh's weapons illegal? If only one-third of the information in the ATF search warrant was true, Koresh was guilty as charged. As for the final confrontation, Koresh (and his followers) could have left the compound safely with his lawyer during the truce and standoff. Clearly, he wanted to meet his maker in the apocalypse he was predicting. . . .

Get serious: America is plagued by cults, some religious in nature and others neo-Nazi, who trap paranoid people into believing the government is out to get them and that they have to arm themselves with arsenals of weapons for self-protection. Local sheriff's departments are no match for these heavily armed fanatics.

Has the federal government made mistakes in some of these cases? Certainly. The case of Randy Weaver in Idaho appears to have been badly mishandled. But for every Weaver case, there are plenty in which federal agents act decisively and correctly. The case of the Arkansas cult, the Covenant, Sword & Arm of the Lord, is typical. The group was raided, shot at ATF agents, and its members later gave up, pleading guilty to illegal weapons charges. . . .

If Koresh's people, who had already been involved in one shoot-out, had struck out again against other religious fanatics, or even their civilian neighbors, the question would have been: Why didn't ATF act sooner?

—Cliff Kincaid
Owings, Maryland

Daniel Wattenberg clearly delineates the legal and ethical ambiguities of the government's assault on the Waco compound. The dangerous incompetence of the assault itself is described in the June and July issues of *Soldier of Fortune.* But this is the good news. Government bureaucrats and paramilitary units can hardly be expected to demonstrate sensitivity to the rights of citizens, even their right to life. The bad news is the deafening silence that has greeted this exercise in mass murder. Where is the congressional committee that pried into every detail of Iran-contra, including how Oliver North paid for his wife's pantyhose? Where is the independent counsel, who spent years and tens of millions to obtain a few petty convictions? Where is the ACLU, usually so feverish in its defense of the unpopular against government intrusion? Where are the liberal media, usually so critical of any use of force by our government? Where are the Hollywood elite, with their myriad conspiracy theories and their endemic suspicion of government, at least of ours? . . .

—Rudolph MacMillan
Los Angeles, California

Daniel Wattenberg built a very good case for his contention that the raid on the compound of David Koresh "was undertaken to boost the agency's standing among Washington bureaucrats and legislators who fund it." Unfortunately, this same criticism could apply to every other federal law enforcement agency. . . .

Toward the end of his article, Mr. Wattenberg . . . takes issue with the veracity of the information furnished by Robert Rodriguez, the ATF undercover agent at the compound, who said that Koresh, upon learning of the planned raid, stated, "Neither ATF or the National Guard will ever get me. They got me once, and they will never get me again." Mr. Wattenberg questions the credibility of the ATF agent because it would *not make sense* for Koresh to say such a thing in light of other circumstances. Does Mr. Wattenberg believe that Koresh, who claimed to be the Son of God and who ordered his male followers to become celibate so he could bed down with their wives, is one who has established a track record for making sense?

Then, in an act of pure hypocrisy, Mr. Wattenberg fails to apply his "make sense" standard to the ATF. As noted in the article, the ATF brought television news crews along on the raid. They wanted good visuals to impress the Washington bureaucrats. Yet Mr. Wattenberg implies that there is some truth to Koresh's contention that the ATF raided the compound "screaming, yelling, like Marines storming the beach," then began shooting at an unarmed Koresh who just came outside to talk.

Is Mr. Wattenberg suggesting that the ATF thought such a display would impress the folks in Washington? Would he also have us believe that the news media, who had cameras rolling, did not think this initial part of the raid was worthy of the evening news? Common sense dictates that the statements of Koresh cannot be given any credibility, yet Mr. Wattenberg blindly follows the words of Koresh like many before him. It seems Mr. Koresh still has the power to deceive, even from the grave. . . . I cannot help but think that Mr. Wattenberg would have kept his objectivity intact had the raid occurred during a Republican administration.

Criticisms aside, I would like to thank everyone at *The American Spectator* for providing such a thought-provoking and enjoyable magazine.

—Lance W. Alexander
Lindenwold, New Jersey

What recommends Daniel Wattenberg's investigative reporting on the deaths of more than eighty members of the Mount Carmel Center (Branch Davidian Seventh-Day Adventist Association) is Wattenberg's refusal to forget the principle of proportionate response that governs law enforcement. Wattenberg is right: "The ATF raiding party and the FBI gas attack placed Davidian children in far greater and more immediate danger than any they had previously faced."

What has been overlooked in the Waco story is not, of course, child abuse (which induced in Attorney General Janet Reno something approaching moral panic); rather, what has been overlooked is elder abuse. I mean, Vernon Howell's abuse of Lois Irene Scott Roden, the late widow of the founder of Branch Davidianism. Failure to investigate this abuse apparently caused the FBI to miss a clue as to how Howell would respond to a gas attack. (Not that Attorney General Reno needed additional reasons not to attack.)

To give a full explanation (Howell's motive for abusing Lois Roden becomes clear only in context): Davidian Adventism is "advanced" or "new light" Adventism. Its organization and teaching turn on the belief that the remnant church will always be led by one—but never more than one—living prophet. Ellen White, Adventism's nineteenth-century founder, was the living prophet of her day. Her "new light" was a twofold reve-

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lation: (1) that William Miller's calculation that the second Advent would take place in 1844 was indeed prophetic, the Great Disappointment notwithstanding (Sister White held that the 1844 Advent did take place—in heaven, not on earth); and (2) that William Miller, for all his *old* prophetic light, got the normative day of worship wrong, blind as he was to the Roman "mark of the beast": Sunday worship. In 1930, Victor Tasha Houteff, a Bulgarian émigré and Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath School teacher, claimed new light: that "the harvest" was at hand; that as the antitypical Elijah his mission was to deliver the pre-millennial kingdom of David over to Christ; that any Adventist who rejected this new light would be "slaughtered" in accord with Ezekiel 9. Houteff's schismatic remnant, confirmed in this new light, came to be known as Davidian Seventh-day Adventists, or The Shepherd's Rod.

In 1955, Victor Houteff died, plunging the crisis-minded Davidians into a real crisis. Florence Houteff, Victor's widow, prophesied an Elijan return for Victor, set for April 22, 1959. Hundreds of Davidians gathered outside Waco to await the event, but no show. In the meantime, Benjamin Roden, a Messianic Jew and long-time Davidian, had secured land in northern Israel, as the providential destination of a Davidian emigration out of Waco; this, in the hope that a great Davidian assembly of Jews and Gentiles, now reconciled in Sabbatarian Adventism, would rule from Jerusalem. Roden rejected the talk he was hearing all around him that Victor/Elijah, presto change-o, would deposit the Waco remnant onto the Land of Israel.

Besides, in 1955, Roden had experienced new light in his own turn. While writing a letter (one of his *Seven Letters to Florence Houteff*?), he found that he could not sign it, overwhelmed by the sense that the words were not his; at which time he heard a voice say, "Sign it The Branch" (cf. Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*: "Men reared the Jewish tabernacle; men builded the Jewish temple; but the sanctuary above, of which the earthly sanctuary was a type, was by no human architect. 'Behold the Man whose name is The Branch' [Zech. 6:12].") Whence Branch Davidianism.

When Ben Roden died in 1978, his wife Lois brought yet newer light to the Waco remnant: that the imago of the Holy Spirit is female in gender. Finding some support for her view in Matronitic Kabbala, late-medieval iconography, and Raphael Patai's *The Hebrew Goddess*, Lois published a magazine called *Shekinah*, a forum in which the Holy Spirit/feminine theme was explored from a variety of perspectives. Ecumenical in appeal, *Shekinah* won the Religion in Media Award for Excellence in 1983. But all was not well at Mount Carmel Center. Mysteriously, Lois's printing facility burned down. Worse: Lois found herself more and more caught between her son George, who from one side was trying to wrest financial control of the Center away from her, and George's nemesis, a newcomer named Vernon Howell, who from the other side was trying to wrest spiritual control of the Center away from her.

Vernon Howell's most conspicuous habit was to confess to one and all what a sinner he was, not (on reliable accounts) as an expression of sorrow for sin, but rather as a Clemencian device to gain control over others, quite as this same Howell quoted scripture not to rationalize his sexual misconduct but to rationalize his uncontrolled *libido dominandi*. Case in point: Howell used Isaiah 8:3 (for Christians, a Marian text) to biblicize his mistreatment of Mrs. Roden. The text reads: "And I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived, and bore a son." Howell used this text to impose himself on Mrs. Roden. Seeing himself as living the Bible "antitypically," Howell went unto his prophetess and, as he later claimed, conceived a son by her. Now whether we regard the new prophet's conduct as seduction or as verging on rape, it is, I submit, a species of abuse; but it is not the element of abuse the FBI missed.

The abuse the FBI missed is Howell's burning down of Lois's *Shekinah* printing department. To quote Doug Mitchell: "One month later [one month after Lois received her media award] our Administration building was burnt down. The fire started in the corner of the printing room where all the in-print literature was stored. Vernon later said that he started the fire."

Vernon said he started the fire. Query: Should not Attorney General Janet Reno have known that Howell had already burned down part of Mount Carmel Center in assessing the risk that, under a gas attack, he would burn down all of it? . . .

—John F. Maguire
Richmond, California

Rethinking AZT

Thank you for publishing Tom Bethell's article, "Rethinking AIDS," in your June 1993 issue. We are on the side of exposing the truth regarding AIDS, HIV, and AZT, as our young daughter is HIV-positive.

After almost two years, we took our daughter off AZT because she was suffering severe side-effects which are common in many AZT users. It was only through a similar article, also written by Tom Bethell, that we became aware of Peter Duesberg, one of the world's leading retrovirologists.

As the debate about what causes AIDS continues, we are finding out how few media people are minding the business of reporting the truth. During the period of time it took us to make up our minds to remove our daughter from AZT, we simply studied the facts at hand. And if anyone chooses, he may find these facts at any medical library.

For us, the debate is over, and we are going about our business—the business of being the parents of our fine young daughter.

—Steve and Cheryl Nagel
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

Schundler and Republicans

As an active New Jersey Republican, I am thrilled by Bret Schundler's election as the mayor of Jersey City. From all that I know of him, he will be good for Jersey City and he certainly will be good for the Republican Party, both in New Jersey and nationally.

Unfortunately, Grover G. Norquist's article on Mayor Schundler's elections ("Rainbow Republican," *TAS*, September 1993) joins the childlike oohing and aahing of conservative political pundits who are making superficial claims of success for their cause without bothering to understand the dynamics of those two elections.

To be sure, Mayor Schundler's victories were of David-versus-Goliath proportions. But the fact remains that one sure way to win in highly urban areas is *not* to run as a Republican. In a grave oversight, Mr. Norquist failed to note that Bret Schundler did not run as a Republican. Jersey City has non-partisan

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elections, so in neither of Mayor Schundler's victorious elections did his name appear on the ballot with the Republican label.

I think it is safe to say that had Bret Schundler run as a Republican, he would have lost. . . .

—Greg M. Edwards
Hamilton, New Jersey

Grover Norquist's article on Bret Schundler helped to focus my thinking on a path that renegade, non-Rockefeller Republicans should follow. Listening to our current president and the noise and nostrums that emanate from his camp, I am reminded of the wonderful stories that were recounted in my American History classes about the Great White Father in Washington and the wonderful things his representatives promised to (name your favorite tribe) in return for their land.

This is the same thing that Democrats have been promising to their many diverse constituencies (including the amorphous middle class) since the days of the Great White Father Franklin. "Give me your vote (land) and I will take care of you forever." Instead of formal reservations, we now have gerrymandered election districts where the Great White Father's representative has a lock on the job because that is how the Great White Father's "promise" will be kept. . . .

Unfortunately, career Republican politicians have made a practice of differentiating themselves from their Democratic counterparts only by reducing the size of the promise. . . . We all need to get off the reservation.

—Thomas E. Ryan
San Rafael, California

As Grover G. Norquist points out, the recent spate of Republican victories bodes well for the Republican Party and poorly for Bill Clinton's presidency. . . .

Right now Jersey City spends an amazing $9,240 per year per student. Yet only 40 percent of its high school students graduate, and many who do are functionally illiterate. In 1989, the city's schools were so bad that the state seized control. But moving control from one political bureaucracy to another hasn't improved matters.

Although school choice is popular in Jersey City and polls taken before May's mayoral election showed 7 out of 10 voters favored the idea, the National Education Association wants to crush school choice. The choice issue tops a list of "Battles to Come" published by the NEA's New Jersey affiliate. A June 17 letter co-signed by NEA national president Keith Geiger warns about money being "diverted" to private schools in Jersey City and asks teachers throughout the state to authorize a deduction from their paychecks to elect anti-choice legislators this fall. . . .

If Bret Schundler pulls off an urban renewal, what excuse will politicians across the Hudson have for the continued urban decay of New York City?

—Holly Obernauer
New York, New York

A Taxing Woman

Congratulations on Lisa Schiffren's excellent article on the Clintons' finances ("Bill and Hillary at the Trough," *TAS*, August 1993). . . .

The front page of July 19's *New York Times* had an article saying that Clinton had no home but the White House. Considering the flak President Bush received for listing a Houston hotel room as his residence for tax purposes, it will be worth taking a peek at the Clinton tax returns for 1993. My bet is that a residence will miraculously crop up in Little Rock. . . .

—Thomas F. Berner
New York, New York

Every taxpayer should attach a copy of Lisa Schiffren's article "Bill and Hillary at the Trough" to their next tax return as "general support" for whatever income and deductions the return reports. It's only fair that all taxpayers be held to the same high standards as their president.

—Guy Favicchio
Rhinebeck, New York

I believe that if you would ask former IRS Commissioner Donald Alexander, quoted by Ms. Schiffren, or any other tax expert, they would tell you that there is no statute of limitations on the crime of tax fraud. They would also tell you that what the Clintons did in failing to report a substantial amount of their income has in some past cases been classified as tax fraud.

The Yale professor who taught Hillary tax law either did a poor job, or else what he taught simply did not take. I assume the same would be true in the case of Bill. Or possibly neither one took any courses in taxation. Considering the way they are proposing to change our tax laws, the latter would seem more likely.

—Donald G. Corley, J.D.
Lynn, North Carolina

Lisa Schiffren's article was fascinating. Regarding the allowances, this is taxable income, and in my opinion, the Clintons are tax evaders.

However, with respect to the hiring of Chelsea's nanny and listing her as a guard, it seems to me that the Clinton's have engaged in criminal activity besides tax evasion. The crime would probably be something like misappropriation of government funds or conversion of public funds to personal use.

I like your magazine.

—Stephen Goth
Wichita, Kansas

Eager to learn "the truth" about Bill and Hillary Clinton's personal finances, I took Rush Limbaugh's advice and set out in search of the August issue of *The American Spectator*. Even in Orange County, California, the *Spectator* isn't too easy to locate, but persistence paid off. After stops at four bookstores I finally made a purchase. . . .

Will Schiffren's arrows stick? . . .

I won't stop listening to Rush Limbaugh . . .

—Mark P. Petracca
Irvine, California
(Editors' note: The writer is a professor of political science at the University of California, Irvine.)

Doc Barnes

I almost completely changed my mind about Fred Barnes after reading his response to Dr. Walter R. Hunter's well-reasoned letter to the editor (*TAS*, September 1993).

While Hunter's contribution made a great deal of sense—right from the horse's mouth—Barnes's did not: his was at best a shallow dip into a bunch of half-truths, not unlike a foot doctor trying to do brain surgery.

I think Barnes, rather than Hunter, should be stopped "before he writes again" on this particular subject.

—F. Paul Kosbab, M.D.
Tulsa, Oklahoma

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I hope Fred Barnes's reply does stop Dr. Hunter from writing again. Unfortunately, Dr. Hunter's second letter forces me to take the time to write you.

Dr. Hunter's comparison of doctors and the "health-care system" to "non-medical businesses such as supermarkets, appliance stores, furniture stores, retail clothing [et al.]" is nothing short of absurd and insulting. These businesses have some reasonable, financially based pricing mechanism. They have the wholesale costs of products sold, utilities, labor costs, etc., to which they add a markup consistent with the competitive environment. Compare that reality to Dr. Hunter's very revealing statement: "A 40-minute office visit in an internist's office might be $135." It surely might. It also might be $90, $55, $108.50 or $225. In short, there is no comparable pricing mechanism to direct doctors' fees into some reasonably narrow channel of expectation. . . .

What Dr. Hunter refers to as "costs" are in many instances merely charges. Since the medical profession views competition and advertising as unseemly, the public is entirely in the dark as to expected charges. . . . Can anyone imagine furniture stores, appliance stores, retail clothing competing with such disparate, capricious "costs"? Supermarkets? Get real. Such disparities can only exist behind a veil of AMA-supported secrecy, in an environment in which most consumers don't actually pay for the services provided.

On May 31, I underwent emergency surgery for acute appendicitis here in a hospital in Caracas, Venezuela. I was in the hospital for a total of four days, received around-the-clock care, the full battery of tests and equipment usage, sonograms and X-rays, and was attended to by a team of physicians (it is a teaching hospital). The total cost of everything—surgery, hospitalization, doctors' fees, etc.—was $470. You see, when Dr. Hunter says, "I haven't seen any patient fork over the $40,000 from his or her private bank account for coronary artery bypass surgery," without realizing it, he is talking as though that "cost" is a firmly grounded, self-establishing, factual, and actual cost (and not a charge)—as though it did not include a heart surgeon's desire to buy a new BMW, or an anesthesiologist's plan to purchase a $400,000 home, or a hospital administrator's pressure to show yet another quarter of 11 percent growth in net profits. . . .

The health-care system's problems represent a crisis of confidence among the American people. The longer people like Dr. Hunter keep their heads buried in the sand, the worse the eventual solution, or catastrophe, will be. . . . The Clintons' administration, despite its grotesque unpopularity, will reap unimaginable political benefits from anything *approaching* a solution. That is a measure of just how badly the AMA, doctors, HMOs, medical-supply companies, pharmaceutical giants, and all the other ostrich-like organizations have done.

—R. D. Adair
Caracas, Venezuela

Burning NAFTA

Marshall Breger is absolutely right about Bill Clinton's questionable commitment to passing NAFTA ("Knifing NAFTA," *TAS*, September 1993). Yet conservatives should be glad to see this wretched "free trade" agreement, the progeny of George Bush and Clinton both, die a quick and timely death.

First, this is now "Clinton's NAFTA," a monstrous abomination that is destined to compete with the European Commission in terms of top-down regulation of business and financial markets. The Democrat-led "managed trade" approach being featured so prominently in the GATT and U.S.-Japan relations is being grafted onto the NAFTA through the "side agreements."

This new NAFTA structure is fashioned by closet socialists such as House Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.), and is a monument to statism and big government. Conservatives should not fool themselves as to why people like Gephardt will eventually support this deal. The artful hand of the Northeast business establishment and the Council on Foreign Relations is easily seen in this "free trade" agreement. This same anti-competitive, collusive business cabal welcomes all of Clinton's federal initiatives on trade, taxes, and health-care reform.

Second, Breger, like many on the right side of the U.S. political and business community, is mistaken about the true nature of the Mexican government, particularly its devotion to "reform." Like its counterparts in Russia, Brazil and Argentina, the ruling elite in Mexico has become increasingly adept at separating foreign investors from their hard-earned dollars. The "free market" Salinas program features a pegged currency to attract new money, wage and price controls, and other statist expedients to suppress (but not eliminate) inflation, and an odious government–big business alliance that rivals the best examples of corporatist behavior in France and Argentina. . . .

Civil liberties and the rule of law are necessary conditions for "free trade"—and these conditions are absent in Mexico today. The Salinas government oppresses its people, steals elections, and at least acquiesces in the production and shipment of narcotics. In fact, estimates place the drug trade as Mexico's largest export, at $16 billion last year twice that of petroleum. . . .

Liberals argue that we should subject Mexico to the same conditions as those which the EC imposed on Greece and Portugal (and still holds over Turkey), before approving NAFTA. Conservatives, however, should shun such alien arguments in disgust. The question here is not about free markets, but about the higher moral principle of freedom. The answer to our "Mexican problem" is not the

(continued on page 95)

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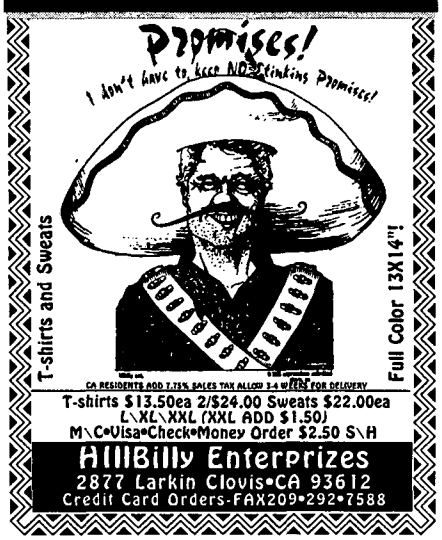

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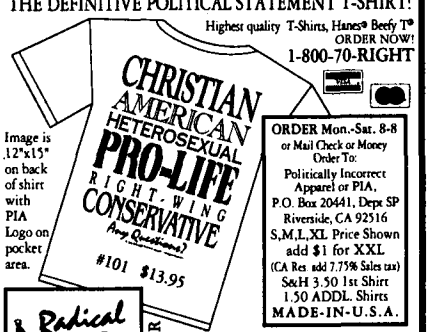

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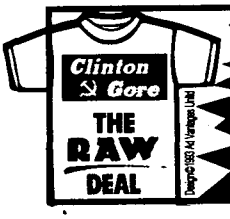

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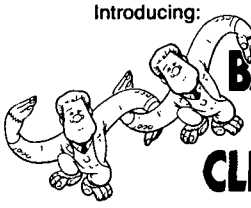

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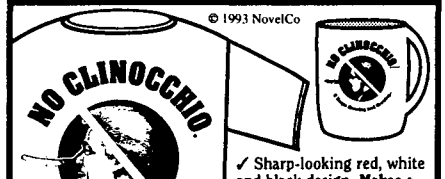

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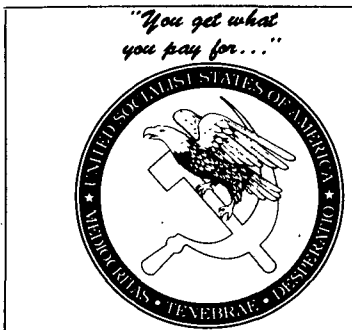

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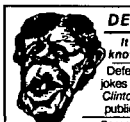

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CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 89)

hastily conceived NAFTA, but a broader and more thoughtful framework to help Mexico find its own way to a civil society. . . .

—Christopher Whalen
Washington, D.C.

. . . Should Mexico fail to develop a vibrant economy capable of creating jobs for its youthful (median age 19), expanding (an additional 30 million in the next twenty years) population, we will see Mexico's problems increase manyfold, well beyond our capacity to deal with them. As the U.S. doesn't have the will to stem this population hemorrhaging we can be sure they will come north if opportunity is lacking south of the border. Carlos Salinas de Gortari has bluntly warned that if the U.S. is unwilling to invest in Mexico we can expect just such a result. We can export some jobs to Mexico (in preference to Southeast Asia) or import poverty on a massive scale.

President Salinas has silenced the anti-American rhetoric of previous administrations, opened his country to foreign investment, reduced the government's stranglehold on the domestic economy, and is leading Mexico "out of the Third World." Should Salinas fail it would be a tragedy for Mexico, and a social and demographic nightmare for the U.S.

—Donald Haverstrom
Putnam, Connecticut

High Drama

Since *The American Spectator* has chosen to focus on dramatic criticism, Yale Kramer would do well to note ("Angels on Broadway," *TAS*, July 1993) that *The Importance of Being Earnest* was originally written as a four-act play; it was reduced to three acts at the request of Oscar Wilde's producer.

Act breaks are the punctuation of structure. No play with this history can be said to be "the most perfectly constructed play in the English language." The author was obviously not concerned with structure as anything more than a frame for dialogue.

Earnest's dialogue has, in fact, been praised by a century of Wildean critics. None have applauded its structure.

—Steven Capra
Canton, Massachusetts

I am inclined to believe that the various views as to the character of Shylock (Donald Lyons, review of John Gross's *Shylock*, *TAS*, June 1993) stem largely from . . . a failure to grasp the essential theme of the play. In the first place, the title is unambiguous: *The Merchant of Venice*, and that Merchant is none other than Antonio (though like Mr. Lyons I've found that many people are under the impression that he is Shylock). . . .

Mr. Gross is way off-base in writing that "the very source for Portia's remarks on mercy is the Jewish sage known as Ecclesiasticus." What nonsense! Mr. Gross doesn't even know that the "Jewish sage" who wrote the Liber Ecclesiasticus was the "Son of Sirach." Actually, the source for Portia's prayer is precisely what it should be in the Christian context of her appeal: "We do pray for mercy" (forgive us our trespasses), "and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy" (as we forgive those who trespass against us).

I became so irritated with Mr. Gross's eagerness to vilify Shakespeare's genius and prove that everyone in the play except Shylock is a bad guy that I felt impelled to write this letter. Shakespeare achieved what he set out to do: he demonstrated that a man is prepared to at least put his life in jeopardy for his friend.

Incidentally, my late father, Charles Warburton (first actor/director of the Old Vic Theatre, London), when he played Shylock at the old Copley Theatre in Boston, was acclaimed by the critics as the finest they had ever seen.

—Joan E. Liebler
Moab, Utah

So Who's Counting?

Pat Schroeder wrote (in the form letter you quoted in Current Wisdom, *TAS*, September 1993):

> Harry Williams said that "thanks to [von Steuben], the American army took the field in 1778 prepared to fight.". . . Two hundred and twenty-five years later, some military leaders argue that gays are incompatible with military service. . . .

Is she trying to say that we can look forward to her being a thorn in our sides on this issue at least until *2003*?

—Alan R. Huber
Lakeside, California

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CURRENT WISDOM

Harper's

In a symposium on the scortatory arts as practiced by our profs and students, Prof. William Kerrigan of the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), arguably the handsomest man on campus, reveals that he also has the heart of the Good Samaritan:

KERRIGAN: I have been the subject of advances from male and female students for twenty-five years. I've had them come at me right and left. I've had people take their clothes off in my office. And there is a particular kind of student I have responded to. I am not defending Don Juanism, you know, sex for grades and so forth. But there is a kind of student I've come across in my career who was working through something that only a professor could help her with. I'm talking about a female student who, for one reason or another, has unnaturally prolonged her virginity. Maybe there's a strong father, maybe there's a religious background. And if she loses that virginity with a man who is not a teacher, she's going to marry that man, boom. And I don't think the marriage is going to be very good.

[September 1993]

Bay Guardian

In a venerable journal of Moral Improvement, a surprise admonition from M. Kamionko:

Is there an unwritten whites-only rule at nude beaches? [See "Bare Facts," 6/16/93]. After having sampled several in the Bay Area I'm left with the impression that even golf and country clubs are more multicultural. Same goes for the often-photographed nudist crowd at Berkeley. Unfortunately, your article tends to reinforce this perception, with only one (apparently) non-white-person-photo out of at least 10 (not to mention the "mud people"). Will someone explain?

[June 23, 1993]

Ocala Star-Banner

(Ocala, Florida)

Another idiot adventure in the American education system:

Instead of sitting in long staff meetings and organizing their classrooms all day Tuesday, Fort McCoy School's 70 teachers spent their first day of school . . . in exercises that are supposed to build communication and problem-solving abilities.

Don Cox, the school's new principal, hopes the exercises will help his teachers to work together and solve problems that come up during the school year. . . .

[One] exercise has about 15 teachers standing on a blanket that was supposed to be a boat surrounded by hungry sharks. The teachers all had to get on the boat, and every time they succeeded, the blanket would be folded over again until it was about half its original size.

The teachers adapted and ended up clenching each other and standing on each other's feet so they could all fit on the blanket.

[August 23, 1993]

Chicago Tribune

Surely a practical jokester on the make:

To call the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, as Barbara Brotman did in the Aug. 26 *Tribune*, "a small model society that operates on . . . respect for diversity" is an outrage given how this major (supposedly) feminist event excludes those feminists who happen to be male. As such a feminist and as one committed to respect for all forms of diversity, I consider such exclusion not only a personal affront but hypocritical, bigoted and, yes, sexist. Sexism, whether practiced by men or women, is sexism.

The festival's exclusion of males (as well as of transsexual women) is not only unfair to the many good and decent men who support equality for women, but to women who would love to introduce their husbands, boyfriends, brothers, sons or other men in their lives to feminist music and culture. . . . Wouldn't all women benefit if more men were exposed to feminism? —*Scott Enk*

[September 6, 1993]

St. Paul's Catholic Center

(Weekly Bulletin)

Lubricious fingers go to work on behalf of Our Lord at the Indiana University Newman Center's health spa.

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—Fr. Kimball Wolf
Certified Massage Practitioner
[August 29, 1993]

Council Chronicle

In the newsletter of the National Council of Teachers of English, another dismal communiqué from a Gestapo agent:

The following letter was received by Anne Ruggles Gere, Chair of the CCCC Executive Committee:

My request, I believe, is a small but important one. I respectfully ask that the CCCC Executive Committee replace the phallologocentric term "dissemination," which appears in "Basic Rules for the Handling of Resolutions at the Annual Business Meeting," found on page 147 of the program for the 1993 CCCC meeting.

I realize that the term may not be that offensive to some people. However, my reading and my discussions with people make me know that some do find the use of "dissemination" offensive.

I make this request because I feel that CCCC should take a strong leadership role on such matters. Because language is our

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field of study, we should be extremely sensitive to the perceptions of people who feel that certain kinds of language exclude them.

I will suggest "distribution" as a substitute term, but you may have other preferences.

—Duane H. Roen
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona
[September 1993]

Variety

Another cautionary tale from the art world:

The self-proclaimed "most violent man in rock 'n' roll," Kevin Michael (G.G.) Allin, died June 28 in New York City at age 36, apparently of a heroin overdose. Allin, whose antics included hurling his feces at audiences, punching out crowd members, and holding women at knife-point (to bring back "the danger in rock 'n' roll, which is dead," he said), had always claimed his death was destined to come on stage, preferably on a Halloween and after he'd "taken a bunch of you (expletive) out with me."

The singer/performance artist's brother and bassist, Merle Allin, said G.G. had been "partying all day, doing coke" prior to a show at Manhattan's Gas Station, an art gallery on the Lower East Side. As was typical of Allin's gigs, the actual set lasted about 10 minutes. But, in Merle's words, "You could sense it was kind of a grand finale."

The Gas Station's particularly violent crowd spilled onto the street and commenced a bottle-hurling battle with police while G.G. made his escape to an Avenue B apartment. There, according to his brother, G.G. copped one too many bags of heroin in an attempt to cool out.

He was found dead the next morning at 9 a.m., but "had clearly been dead for about five hours," according to his brother. "He was totally blue, and rigor mortis had set in to the point where I couldn't get the rings off his fingers."

Allin will be buried in New Hampshire. At his request, he will be laid to rest in his favorite outfit: a dog collar, a leather jockstrap and boots.

[July 6, 1993]

Times-Colonist
(Victoria, B.C.)

An auspicious report for all goose-stepping members of the New Thought Patrol:

The Canadian version of *Sesame Street*, the children's television show, has begun broadcasting animated vignettes profiling same-sex roommates taking care of kids as well as single-parent families.

In its animated 45-second feature entitled *Alison's Magic Kettle*, a young girl visits a number of families of friends.

Alison tells the audience she lives with her single mom and dog, then says: "But not everyone lives with their mom, of course. Let me show you some of my friend's parents."

It shows the girl visiting her friend Cassia, who "lives with her mom and her mom's friend Maria" as they fix a bike outside.

Sesame Street executive producer Shirley Greenfield said the segment that caused the biggest uproar has Alison visiting her friend Ben.

In the clip that shows two men shaving in a bathroom, Alison says: "Ben lives with his dad and his dad's friend Jim."

Ben says: "Yep, Jim is a part of my family too."

Alison replies: "Oh neat. Good-bye."

Sesame Street began broadcasting the vignette last fall. Since then, Greenfield estimates she has fielded about 10 complaints, "about one per province."

[July 17, 1993]

State of Wisconsin
Department of Corrections

In a memorandum about what Big Brother calls harassment, Mr. Patrick J. Fiedler, secretary, brings the time-honored policies of the North Vietnamese re-education camp to his humorless department:

Several steps will be taken in the near future to promote a harassment-free work environment. The harassment policy will be reissued to all staff. You will be required to sign a sheet, indicating you have read the document. In addition, all staff will be expected to attend harassment training in the next three years. Training will be offered regularly at both training centers and at individual work sites as well.

The Department's Affirmative Action staff is available to answer questions and discuss problems related to harassment and discrimination as well as to investigate complaints. Complaints to the Department AA Office must allege discrimination on the basis of at least one of the following: race, sex, creed, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, sexual orientation, arrest or conviction records, political affiliation, or military reserve membership. Complaints or questions can be addressed to: Department of Corrections Affirmative Action Office, 149 East Wilson Street, Madison, Wisconsin, 53702 or you may call: Jo Winston, Equal Opportunity Officer, (608) 267-9082/TDD (608) 267-3676 or Therese Sundet, Equal Opportunity Officer Specialist, (608) 266-0561.

[July 8, 1993]

Safari Times

Judge Thomas A. Olson sanctifies the good kind of harassment:

The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department is appealing a State District Court judge's ruling that a law protecting hunters from harassment by animal rights activists is unconstitutional.

On June 24, Judge Thomas A. Olson ruled that Montana's Hunter Protection Law was in violation of an individual's First Amendment right to free speech.

The case involved a March 13, 1990, incident during a bison hunt at Horse Butte, Mont. The hunter had drawn a tag for a special hunt to take one of the bison that had wandered out of Yellowstone National Park.

The defendant and 10 other members of Fund for Animals, allegedly brought in expressly for the purpose of disrupting the hunt, confronted the hunters.

When one of the hunters took aim at a bison, an animal rights activist stepped in front of his rifle and shouted, "Don't shoot."

The hunter moved away, and took aim at another animal. Again, the activist ran in front of his loaded rifle shouting, "Don't shoot."

At this point, one of the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department employees arrested the activist under a Montana law prohibiting harassment of hunters during legal hunting season.

According to Judge Olson's ruling on the Montana anti-harassment law, it "prohibits communication with hunters, which is intended to dissuade them from hunting, while allowing communication with hunters which encourages hunting, even if such communication prevents a hunter from taking the prey. For example, if a bystander exclaims, 'There he is! Shoot! Shoot!' and the commotion caused the hunter to miss his shot, the bystander cannot be prosecuted. However, if that same bystander said, 'There he is! Don't shoot! Don't shoot!,' the speaker could be prosecuted.

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks said the appeal probably won't be settled until well after this year's big game season.

The hunter who was being harassed eventually killed a buffalo elsewhere.

[August 1993]

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Oh, to Be in Graceland . . .

by Stuart Reid

"Now this is really wonderful. This is something else." The auto dealer from Leesburg, Virginia, stood in the middle of the State Dining Room at Buckingham Palace with his head back and his hands on his hips. He was in his thirties and wore black pants, black sneakers, a black polo shirt, and a red windbreaker tied by its sleeves round his middle. He grinned with pleasure. "Have you ever been to Graceland?" he asked. "I mean I'm not saying that Graceland is anything like as good as this—don't get me wrong—but you know . . ."

I knew. The State Dining Room is a riot of red plush, not quite as overpowering as the Throne Room, with its seven dazzling glass and gilt bronze chandeliers, but powerful enough nonetheless to bring on an acid flashback in an unsuspecting baby-boomer. It seems to be especially popular—along with the equally violent Green Drawing Room (green walls, red carpet, more strobe chandeliers)—with young men in tank tops, crew cuts, and mustaches. Not that the Virginian was one of those (or them). Certainly not. "From a *masculine* point of view," he said soon after I had accosted him at the entrance of the Palace, "Diana is a very attractive woman. Know what I'm saying?" Oh, absolutely.

The fact is, though, the palace is a queen's paradise. True, the Queen herself is said not to like the place, but there can be no doubt that Liberace would have loved it. And so would have the King himself. Krystle Carrington, on the other hand, would have called in the decorators, and demanded something a little more restrained, a little more in keeping with the essential dignity of man.

Buckingham Palace, which opened its doors to the public (at £8 a head) at the beginning of August and closed them at the end of September (when the Queen returned from her summer vacation in Scotland), has never been much admired by the smart set. In 1836 the diarist Thomas Creevey was given a tour, and sniffed: "It has cost a million of money," he wrote, "and there is not a fault that has not been committed in it. . . . The costly ornaments of the State Dining Room exceeded all belief in their bad taste—raspberry pillars without end that make you quite sick to look at."

It was not always thus. What is now the Queen's official residence is a parvenu among palaces. It was bought by George III, last King of America, in 1762, when it was still the handsome and relatively modest brick-and-stone mansion that had been built for the Duke of Buckingham in 1702. John Adams, as the first American Minister to Great Britain, noted in 1783 that it was "without the smallest affectation, ostentation, profusion or meanness." The rot set in during the reigns of George IV and William IV, when work began on converting Buck House into the theme park palace we know today. Queen Victoria did not use it much. This embarrassed the great and good of the day, who, it turns out, were much like the great and good of our own day: i.e., full of socially responsible ideas. In 1890, for example, someone suggested that the palace be turned into a home for fallen women. (Piquant, what?)

Suggestions that the palace be opened to the public were however rejected with the contempt they deserved until this year when, faced with a bill of £40 million for the fire damage at Windsor Castle, the Queen agreed to take in paying guests, but for a limited period—five years—and for only two months each year. Her Majesty's subjects were not greatly impressed. Only the eighteen state rooms are open to the rude gaze. "Eight pounds for 18 rooms out of 661," sneered the *Guardian*. "Big deal."

But for the tens of thousands of Americans who this summer stood in line for up to three hours to get into the palace—the tour lasts for about three-quarters of an hour—it was a big deal. "I'm honored to be here," said the Virginian. "Honored. Have any Americans told you what an honor it is to be here?" A dietitian, in her sixties, from Atlanta, Georgia, said: "It's just like a palace should be, and such good value."

The dietitian was right, at any rate, about the value. As well as the wealth of kitsch, there is the Picture Gallery, where visitors can swoon over paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens, Hals, Cuyp, Van Dyck, and de Hooch. "Outstanding works are marked with an asterisk," says the official guide. "Must be in case we are too dumb to figure that out for ourselves," said a man in his fifties from Kiawah Island, South Carolina.

In addition to the paintings in the gallery proper, there are the royal portraits scattered about the State Rooms, perhaps most arresting of which is the magnificent, slightly bug-eyed George III by Allan Ramsay (1713-84). "What about that George III, then?" I asked the dietitian, quoting the Declaration of Independence to the effect that the king's crimes were "scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages and totally unworthy of the Head of the civilized Nation." "I don't care about George III," she replied. "Now that General Sherman, he's another matter . . ."

The idea that Britain might one day become a republic struck the dietitian as absurd. "Royalty might be a bit anachronistic, but where would you be without them? Imagine America without the movie stars." The Virginian agreed: "Nobody but a crazy person would say that royalty is finished. Listen, this is no window-dressing Queen. She is in control of herself and her environment. She is brilliant, she is witty, she is clever." Such devotion.

Earlier, outside the palace, two yahoos had been lounging about in T-shirts printed with the words: "I was in ER bedroom." Poor Elizabeth Regina. Sometimes it seems that her only loyal subjects are to be found in the former colonies. ❐

Stuart Reid is assistant features editor of the London Sunday Telegraph.

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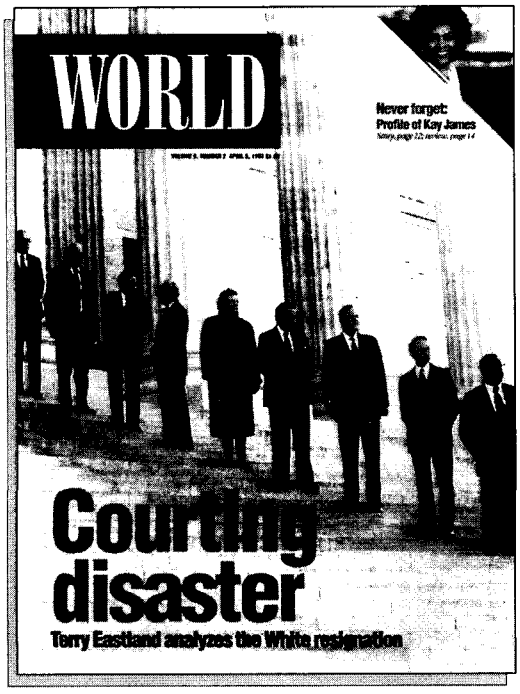

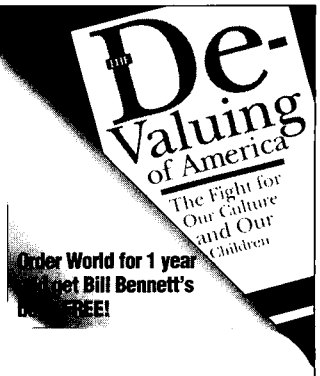

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